

THE CONTROVERSY between KARL BARTH and EMIL BRUNNER

CONCERNING

NATURAL THEOLOGY.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT.

- C.U.M. = E. Brunner. The Christian Understanding of Man. Church Community and State Series. Vol. II. London. 1938.
- Dogmatik I.1. = K. Barth. Die Kirchliche Dogmatik I.1. Die Lehre vom Wort Gottes. München. 1932.
- Dogmatic I.1. = English Translation of above by G.T. Thomson.
- Dogmatik I.2. = K. Barth. Die Kirchliche Dogmatik. I.2. Die Lehre vom Wort Gottes. Zollikon. 1938.
- E.R.E. = Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
- K.G. = K. Barth. The Knowledge of God and the Service of God. English Translation by J.L.M. Haire and Ian Henderson. London. 1938.
- M.i.W. = E. Brunner. Der Mensch im Widerspruch. Berlin. 1937.
- M.i.R. = Man in Revolt. English Translation of above by Olive Wyon.
- M.V.K. = Ed. Schlink. Der Mensch in der Verkündigung der Kirche. München. 1936.
- N.u.G. = Brunner. Natur und Gnade. 1934. Zweite, stark erweiterte Auflage. 1935.
- R.G.G. = Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.
- T.E.h. = Theologische Existenz heute.
- Z.d.Z. = Zwischen den Zeiten.
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PREFACE.

The main purpose of this thesis is adequately indicated by its title. In order to set it in its proper perspective the study of the actual controversy has been preceded by a short account of the dialectical theology in which it arose and of the historical background to which it owes its significance.

Considerations of time and space have imposed two restrictions on the thesis, one of them important. Both Barth and Brunner appeal to Luther and Calvin in support of their respective stand-points. I greatly regret that, apart from incidental references, I have been unable to give to this aspect of the controversy the attention its importance deserves.

The other limitation is of merely personal moment. I would fain have extended the concluding section, which in writing had to be severely curtailed, if only to discover whether the suggestion adumbrated at the close of the third section would yield a new and more promising approach to this age-long problem or prove yet another theological cul-de-sac.

I. THE DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY.

A. THE RISE OF THE DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY.

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I. THE DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY

A. THE RISE OF THE DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY

1. The Historical Background.

The nineteenth century, including the years of the twentieth, up to the Great War, which belong to the same historical epoch, has been characterised as theologically "one of the most notable ever traversed by the Christian Church." Professor Mackintosh in the introduction to his study of the theology of this period emphasises the richness and complexity of the problems raised and the swiftness of their movement, both of which make broad generalisations difficult and even misleading. (1)

Many attempts have been made to summarise the period, the best known to me being that of Professor Karl Heim in a lecture given in Edinburgh on 2nd July 1936 and subsequently printed in the Expository Times (2) "German theology in the nineteenth century," he says, "followed three lines of development. It had three starting-points."

1. The first of these starting points was the philosophy of Kant with his doctrine of the moral autonomy of the individual. This found its theological expression in the work

(1) Mackintosh Types of Modern Theology Chap.I. § 1.

(2) Expository Times Vol. 48 pp 55 ff.

of Ritschl and his disciples. Here the central idea is that of the Kingdom of God "which Jesus founded, as a Kingdom of "autonomous individuals who know that God is not a Judge, but the Father of all mankind". (3)

2. The second starting-point was the speculative philosophy and theology of Hegel, and, in particular, the development of that speculation in the work of D.F. Strauss. "The "basis of this theology was the abstract idea of the identity "of the infinite with the finite. A timeless idea, a Christ "principle, was put in the place of the historical person of "Jesus. . . . The idea of salvation, by means of which the "whole of humanity accomplishes its own deliverance, is then "substituted for the Saviour who appeared at a specific, never- "to-be-repeated point in history." (4)

This theology entered into alliance with the Higher Criticism and together they constituted the dominant influence in the second half of the nineteenth century. (5)

3. The third starting-point was religious experience. At the beginning of the century Schliermacher initiated the method which was to have such influence. Turning from the cold externalism of the rational and moral doctrines about God which were so characteristic of his age he chose as his point

(3) Expository Times Vol. 48 55.
cf. Mackintosh op. cit. 21-25 152 f. 174 ff.

(4) Expository Times Vol. 48 p.55.

(5) cf. Mackintosh op. cit. Chap. IV.

of departure the soul's experience of spiritual life within the Christian Church and proceeded to elucidate from the content of the believer's soul the whole range of Christian doctrine. He sought as Heim says "to read off every dogmatic utterance about "God, Christ, and the Church from religious feeling, just as "one reads off the chemical composition of a star from the "spectrum produced when its light is passed through a glass "prism" p. 56. This emphasis on the priority and importance of the religious consciousness led to the great development of religious psychology and the production of that vast stream of subjective religious studies which is only now beginning to dry up. (6)

These main trends, and many subsidiary ones, were all influenced by one great idea which has been characteristic of Western thought since the Renaissance, the idea of continuity. Behind all the diversity and change in every sphere of human life there is to be found an underlying homogeneity and a continuous connection. There is, in the last resort, an unbroken line of development in the universe from matter to life, from life to mind, from man to God. This is true of religion as of all other things. There is only one truth, though it may be manifest in many forms, some purer and higher than others. The work of the religious teacher was to investigate the current

(6) cf. Mackintosh. op. cit. Chap. III.

forms in which this truth was expressed in order to strip them of their non-essentials and disclose their essence. This was the general standpoint of Liberalism which, until the war, dominated religious thought.

The work accomplished by German theologians in the period under review was indeed a great achievement of German science. It was due in the main to three outstanding factors. (1) In Germany there were some twentyfive fully staffed theological faculties at work and a large body of theologically minded ministers ready to buy and study the books produced by their more leisured brethren in the professional chairs. Through these and through the innumerable theological periodicals any question raised was given a most thorough examination. (2) Despite the close relation of Church and State there existed in Germany a wider doctrinal freedom. This may have resulted at times in extravagant speculations and a lack of concern for the relation of these to the historic Christian faith but this freedom is preferable to that undue caution in utterance and suppression of thought which comes of fear of the Church's disciplinary action. (3) The thoroughness in research and in the pursuit of truth which is so characteristic of the German mind.

But great as this achievement was "theology during the "second half of the nineteenth century felt that its development "would lead towards a catastrophe . . . It was in itself not

"able to elaborate a new Protestant doctrine: it served only
 "to criticise traditional theology. It is significant that
 "Troeltsch, one of the most remarkable representatives of
 "this theology, deemed it a natural progress that he passed
 "from the theological to the philosophical faculty." (7)

Since then a revolution has taken place so thorough
 that there is scarcely a trace of the old ideas and methods
 left in present-day continental theology. The 19th century
 giants - von Harnack, Troeltsch, and the rest - were indeed
 giants: but they are felt to belong to the past. It is this
 which explains the remark of a German theologian about von
 Harnack. "We have conducted him to Olympus, from which eminence
 "he surveys a world to which he no longer belongs." (8)

This revolution has been the outcome of a variety of
 factors.

2. Factors in the Theological Revolution.

a. The first is that achievement of the critical his-
 torical work on the New Testament in which the liberal con-
 ception of Christianity in the nineteenth century dug its own
 grave. The discovery of N.T. eschatology by Schweitzer and
 Johannes Weiss and the work of Wrede and Schweitzer on the

(7) Otto Piper. Recent Developments in German Protestant-
 ism p. 35.

(8) Article on "The New Theologians" in Times Literary
 Supplement. Recent German Literature number
 18-4-29 p. XI.

lives of Jesus showed that the Jesus of History was the product of nineteenth century theology and had nothing in common with the figure they sought to portray. "The Jesus of Nazareth who came forward publicly as the Messiah, who preached the ethic of the Kingdom of God, who founded the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and died to give His work its final consecration, never had any existence. He is a figure designed by rationalism, endowed with life by liberalism, and clothed by modern theology in an historical garb. This image has not been destroyed from without, it has fallen to pieces, cleft and disintegrated by concrete historical problems which came to the surface one after another. The historical foundation of Christianity as built up by rationalistic, by liberal, and by modern theology no longer exists." (9)

b. The second factor in this revolution was the new discovery of Luther. "I think that the new understanding of Luther is one of the most important facts in the history of modern German Protestantism. The new Theology has attained to a quite new and, we may add, an adequate understanding of Luther." (10)

This new understanding was due partly to the discovery of new and important documents which threw fresh light on Luther's religious development, partly to the new method of

(9) Schweitzer. The Quest of the Historical Jesus. 396 f.

(10) Otto Piper. Recent Developments in German Protestantism. p. 78. S.C.M. 1934.

historical interpretation. "The most important event in modern
 "research on Luther was doubtless the discovery of his lectures
 "on the Epistle to the Romans of 1515-16. For these lectures not
 "only mark the decisive change in his religious and theological
 "attitude, but also reveal better than any later documents the
 "main forces of his religious life." (11)

The new method of historical interpretation owed much to
 William Dilthey who developed two essential principles.

(a) There is a constant element in the personality which while
 it may change and develop always preserves its identity.

"A person is a totality, and the historian's task is to
 "find out the constant features which constitute his
 "essence from his first day to his last." (12)

(b) A man's thoughts are related to his character and his
 experience and he can only be understood historically
 when this relation is made clear. A true interpreta-
 tion can only be made by a congenial mind working in
 like circumstances. "Therefore, I think it is quite
 "natural that the new interpretation of Luther has been
 "elaborated only during the last fifteen years . . .
 "Only after that terrible experience of the War, which
 "stirred souls to their depths, could the realities
 "about which Luther spoke be discovered." (13)

(11) *ibid* 79.

(12) *ibid* 81.

(13) *ibid* 82.

Prof. Karl Holl was a pioneer in the interpretation of the new documents and Emil Brunner says that he still remembers the delight with which he first read Holl's lectures as they appeared at intervals from 1910 on. What Holl dug out of Luther's lectures on Romans was as different from nineteenth century Christianity as Schweitzer's picture of Jesus was from the liberal one. "If Christian faith is what Luther understood by the word, then that which a Schleiermacher and a Ritschl - to say nothing of Troeltsch and Otto - understood is something other than Christian faith." (14)

The War and the anniversary of the Reformation in 1917 led to a reawakening of interest in Luther and this resulted in many new discoveries. Every discovery involves a personal interpretation and Holl's pioneer work has already been attacked as being too subjective and too greatly influenced by the ideals of modernism and cultural Protestantism. "The present Lutheran interpreters of Luther and the Lutheran Reformation, such as Professors Aulén and Runestam in Sweden, Professors Althaus, Elert and Sasse in Erlangen - partly under the influence of Karl Barth - are trying to avoid such modernistic or liberal influences in their interpretation of the young Luther." (15)

The result is a fresh emphasis on the exclusiveness of

(14) Emil Brunner. 'Continental European Theology' in "The Church through Half a Century." Essays in honour of William Adams Brown. p. 140. It is to this essay I am most deeply indebted in this section.

(15) Keller. Religion and the European Mind. p. 50.

of grace and faith in the evangelical conception of Christian life, a better understanding of the dark background of sin and the wrath of God, who in His sovereign majesty is our Judge and Lord. "Even where the old doctrinal formulae are used, it is evident that they are filled with a new spirit, a readiness to acknowledge the spiritual authority of the Bible, in spite of Biblical criticism, to take a fresh stand upon grace alone, to mark the difference between God's transcendent and coming Kingdom and this aeon which is under His judgment, and to build up an ethics, long neglected by the former Lutheranism, not on a philosophical but on a truly evangelical basis of justification by faith and on a new discrimination between the reign of Grace and the reign of the world." (16)

c. The third factor was the "conservative Theology" which throughout the century had flowed on as a separate stream alongside Liberalism. (17) This theology drew its strength out of the Revival Movement. Tholuch and Beck, Hofmann and Frank were genuine children of the great revival which set in at the end of the Napoleonic wars. They sought to carry on the orthodox Reformed tradition. This had almost died out at the time of the twentieth century though men like Professor Kähler and Professor Schlatter had never ceased to protest against the modernistic

(16) Keller. op. cit. p. 52.

(17) See F. Kattenbusch: Die deutsche evangelische Theologie seit Schleiermacher. 49, 65 ff.

H.R. Mackintosh. The Grouping of German Theologians.
The Expositor. May 1925. pp. 377 ff.

theology. In the new generation this was carried on by Professor Heim in Tübingen and Professor Althaus in Erlangen and when the revolution came it was seen how valuable a treasure had thus been preserved to be handed on to a generation prepared to receive it.

d. The real impulse, however, came from the "Dialectical Theology". Since the development and principles of this theology must hereafter be dealt with at some length we may, to avoid unnecessary repetition, content ourselves with the mere mention of it at this point.

e. The fifth factor, without which one cannot understand either the speed or the completeness of the theological transformation that has taken place on the Continent is found in the historical events themselves. With 1914 an historical epoch came to an end, and with it a theological one - the epoch of the optimistic belief in progress that was an outcome of the enlightenment. The world catastrophe which began in the year 1914, and which has not yet reached its lowest depths, shattered for many that faith upon which the whole modern world, and especially modern philosophy and theology, rested - faith in the divinity of the human spirit.

"The war meant not only the defeat of an army. It was the defeat of a spirit: it dramatized the limit of man's possibilities." (18) Out of the fearful sufferings and deprivations of the war and post-war years, the sense of

(18) Keller. op. cit. p. 33.

frustration and impotence which descended upon multitudes a new spirit of questioning was born, and a new outlook produced. "It is not the first time that a catastrophe has been responsible for a change in the Christian mind. The earthquake of Lisbon, in 1755, shook not only thousands of houses in a large city, but the whole Christian optimism of that time. The war had a similar effect on Christian thinking on the Continent. The vain efforts of militarism to settle man's destiny, the failures of conferences convened for the solution of international problems, all seemed to prove that man had reached his limit: that he was not so strong, nor so wise, nor so good as we had thought: that neither the State nor the Church, neither human force nor human spirit had really the power to change the world and assure the life and peace of man." (19)

Thus the problems of evil and death thrust themselves upon the modern mind with renewed force and made the easy optimism and rationalistic thinking of the past impossible. This is as characteristic a starting point for the new kind of theological thinking which has so quickly superseded the old as the new appreciation of the reality of God. (20)

These factors all point in the same direction. They all emphasise the breakdown of that view of man, his achievements and possibilities that underlay the life and thought of European

(19) Keller. op. cit. 34-5.

(20) cf. Otto Piper. op. cit. pp. 39-58.

civilisation. The illusions of 'progress' are shattered. The merely 'natural' man is condemned. "All truth which man gains "by reason, by culture, and even by religion does not alter the "fact that man when he looks upon his own countenance must be "appalled by what he sees. With all his truths man cannot avoid "the penetrating and permeating accusation that he is outside of "the truth and against the truth. That is the point of departure "for the theology of revelation." (21) Isn't it possible, men were asking, to escape from the subjective and relative and from that type of theology which finds its centre in man, and in merely human "religious experience", and to recover once more a theology which finds its centre in God?

(21) E. Brunner. op. cit. pp. 143-4.

B. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY.

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B. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY

1. Barth the leading figure in this theological Revolt.

It is, we have seen, as a reaction against the prevailing currents of theological thought that the dialectical theology is to be understood. The anthropocentric interpretation of religion and faith which, since the time of Schleiermacher at least, has dominated theological discussion, and the influence of idealistic philosophy are severely criticised as the main sources of the deterioration of Protestantism laid bare by the war. The positive aim of the dialectical theology is to renew the theological outlook characteristic of the early Christian, Pauline and Reformed theologies. This was expressed by Brunner in his controversial book on Schleiermacher. Its main object, he declared, was, "to lay bare the opposition between 'what Schleiermacher desired' " and the world of faith (Glaubenswelt) of the Apostles and Reformers; to demonstrate from this classical example the inner "impossibility of a union of that mystical philosophy of immanence "and the Christianity of the Bible - which is the content of "Schleiermacher's life's work, and to set theology before the "decision: either Christ or modern religion." (1)

In the fragments of his stimulating talk, preserved for us by Professor Knight in *Colloquia Peripatetica*, that strange

(1) *Die Mystik und das Wort*. 10.

genius 'Rabbi' Duncan says "The tendency of all my thinking is "not to look upwards from man to God, but downwards from God to "man." "But", objected Knight, "as we are not divine, how do "you get up in the first instance?" "I cannot tell you; only, "I am up . . . I must start from theology." (2) This is precisely the point of view of the dialectical theology. Instead of beginning with man as if he were the known quantity and regarding God as the problem, they start from God and thus overcome the fatal weakness of the theology they criticise, namely, its identification of God and man. This may be most simply expressed by a quotation from Barth's commentary on Romans. "Paul is "authorized to deliver - the Gospel of God. He is commissioned "to hand over to men something quite new and unprecedented, joyful and good, - the truth of God. Yes, precisely - of God! "The Gospel is not a religious message to inform mankind of their "divinity or to tell them how they may become divine. The Gospel "proclaims a God utterly distinct from men. Salvation comes to "them from Him, because they are, as men, incapable of knowing "Him, and because they have no right to claim anything from Him." (3)

Since God and man are thus separated by a gulf which man can never bridge the problem of revelation assumes a new importance and urgency. This is, indeed, the fundamental problem and it

(2) 6th edition 1907. pp. 2-3.

(3) The Epistle to the Romans. Eng. Tr. 28.

calls for a fresh understanding of the nature of Scripture and the task of theology. "Biblical dogmatics are fundamentally "the suspension of all dogmatics. The Bible has only one "theological interest and that is not speculative: interest in "God himself." (4)

It was this revolt against nineteenth century theology which united a group of young theologians who in 1922 became contributors to *Zwischen den Zeiten*. In addition to Karl Barth and his close friend Eduard Thurneysen, it included Emil Brunner, Friedrich Gogarten and Rudolf Bultmann. (5) These men had come to a similar religious and theological outlook from different traditions, and along largely independent paths, and in course of time their differences have become more marked and led to divisions among them. (6)

The outstanding figure was that of Karl Barth, then Professor of Reformed Theology at Göttingen, whom Professor Mackintosh regarded as "incontestably the greatest figure in "Christian theology that has appeared for decades." (7) The leading part played by Barth in this new movement has been acknowledged even by those who disagree with him. "He swung "the tiller of theology so hard," says Karl Heim, "that the "whole Church 'came about'." (8) Emil Brunner, in his

(4) Barth. *The Word of God and the Word of Man*. 73
cited in future as *Word of God*.

(5) Wilhelm Koepp. *Die gegenwärtige Geisteslage und die dialektische Theologie*. 34 ff.

(6) See *Zwischen den Zeiten* 1933. 536 ff.

(7) *Types of Modern Theology*. 263.

(8) Quoted Keller *Religion and the European mind*. 79.
The reference is to Heim *Glaube und Denken* (2te Auflage) 407.

polemical pamphlet, "Natur und Gnade", speaks of Barth's service to theology in words of generous praise. "The acknowledgment is due to Karl Barth without restriction and, if I may say so, without rival that he has given back to Protestant theology her subject . . . In a few years he has completely changed the situation of Protestant theology. His influence has been powerful even where he is not acknowledged. The subject of debate is no longer to-day, as it was fifteen years ago, 'religion', but the Word of God, no longer the god in us but the revelation in Jesus Christ. In a word, the subjects which interest us are no longer those of the Enlightenment, but that of the Bible itself. We others, who have helped Barth in this struggle are one and all those whose eyes he has first opened, even though some have not found a word of open acknowledgment to Barth." (8a) What we propose to do, therefore, is to give an exposition of Barth's theology and then to show briefly the position of the others in relation to him.

2. Names given to this Movement.

Before beginning the exposition a word may be said about the names given to this theological group.

It has sometimes been called the "Barthian theology", but that fails to do justice to the independent stand point of the

(8a) Brunner. Natur und Gnade 4-5.
cf. Gogarten. Gericht oder Skepsis 152.

other members. Nor does it satisfy Barth who desires only to serve the Church, not to found a school. (9)

Ferdinand Kattenbusch has suggested that "theocentric theology" would have been a very suitable name had it not already been chosen by Erich Schöder. (10)

"The Theology of the Word of God" is the title favoured by Mackintosh and it has much to recommend it. Speaking of the aim of this theology, Brunner said "It is seeking to declare the Word of the Bible to the world". (11) Gogarten claims a similar aim, (12) and this note is dominant in all that Barth says. But favour is fickle, and the title, however suitable, has not 'caught on'.

Two names have won a wider recognition. In 1924 Adolf Keller contributed two articles to the Expositor on "A Theology of Crisis" and the same title was chosen by Brunner for the lectures given in the States in 1928, which were the first expositions in English by one of the leaders of this theology. The word "crisis", as Brunner pointed out, has two meanings, "first, it signifies the climax of all illness; second, it denotes a turning point in the progress of an enterprise or

(9) Dogmatic I. 1. xi-x.

(10) Die deutsche evangelische Theologie seit Schleiermacher. 125.

(11) The Word and the World, 6.

(12) Gericht oder Skepsis, 11.

"movement". (13) The "crisis", in this theology, refers not only to the crisis of modern civilisation and modern theology, but to the crisis in which men always stand under the judgment of God.

In 1922 the name "dialectical theology" was bestowed on this group by certain outsiders. (14) This, though not chosen by themselves, was recognised as being "not unfitted to bring out what it stands for. The word 'dialectic' - used in Kierkegaard's sense, not Hegel's, - points to something which Luther frequently indicates by the simple statement that in His revelation God is hidden sub contraria specie." (15) We, living in time and space, cannot speak directly of God. When the Word of God enters into the world it is broken like a rod in water. We can only speak the Word in paradox, i.e. in propositions which from our human stand-point are contradictory. The eternal God enters time, the holy God forgives sin, the sinner is pronounced just and eternal life is a present possession. As Barth once wrote "My friend, you must understand that if you ask about God and if I am really to tell you about Him, dialectic is all that can be expected of me. I have done what I could to make you see that neither my affirmation nor my denial lays claim to

(13) The Theology of Crisis, 1.

(14) Barth. Zwischen den Zeiten 1933. 536.

(15) Brunner. The Word and the World, 6.

"being God's truth. Neither is more than a witness to that truth, "which stands in the centre, between every yes and no. And therefore I have never affirmed without denying and never denied without affirming, for neither affirmation nor denial can be final." (16)

The word has been dropped by Barth because it was in danger of becoming a catchword. "It is inadvisable", he told his questioners at Utrecht in 1935, "for the theologian to bind himself for too long a period or too much in principle to any conceptions. That is, it is inadvisable for him to anchor himself systematically to any technical terminology." (17)

But if the word has disappeared that which it expressed still remains as may be seen from what Barth has to say about "God's Language as God's Mystery." (18)

For this reason, as well as on the ground of its well-nigh universal acceptance, we will continue to speak of this theological movement as the dialectical theology.

3. Biographical Notes on Karl Barth.

Karl Barth was born in 1886 in Basle, Switzerland, where his father Fritz Barth, later a professor of the New Testament at Berne, was then a minister. He began his studies at Berne and then went on to the German Universities of Tübingen, Berlin and Marburg where he came under the influence of Schlatter,

(16) The Word of God. 209.

(17) Credo. Eng. Tr. 185.

(18) Dogmatic I. 1. 184 ff.

Harnack and Herrmann, respectively. It was the latter, whom he describes as, "my unforgettable teacher," and "the theological teacher of my student days," who influenced him most deeply. Speaking of him in 1925 Barth said "It seems to me that Herrmann showed me something fundamental which, thought through consistently, later obliged me to say differently practically everything else, and finally to interpret even that fundamental something itself, entirely otherwise than he did." (19)

A year on the editorial staff of "Die christliche Welt" was followed by two years at Geneva, as assistant in the German Reformed Church. In 1911 he went to Safenwil in the canton of Aargau where he had Eduard Thurneysen as a near neighbour. There the two young pastors became interested in the radical religious-social movement associated with the names of Hermann Kutter and Leonhard Ragaz. (20)

In his work Barth found himself "forced back at every point more and more upon the specific minister's problem, the sermon." (21)

On the one hand were his people, engaged on this strange adventure called life, on the other, the Bible with its no less perplexing message. Somehow or other those two must be brought into vital contact with one another. "Often enough these two

(19) Die Theologie und die Kirche. 241.

(20) Ed. Thurneysen zum religiös-sozialen Problem. Z. d. Z. 1927. 514 ff.

(21) Barth. Word of God. 100.
cf. Thurneysen op. cit. 515.

"magnitudes, life and the Bible, have risen before me (and still
 "rise!) like Scylla and Charydbis: if these are the whence and
 "whither of Christian preaching, who shall, who can, be a minister
 "and preach?" Thus "it simply came about that the familiar
 "situation of the minister on Saturday at his desk and on Sunday
 "in his pulpit crystallised in my case into a marginal note to
 "all theology." (22)

This process was accelerated by the outbreak of war in 1914. Speaking for Barth and himself, Thurneysen says that the war seemed to them a judgment on a Christianity that had become too bourgeois. They soon saw, however, that it involved the collapse of religious socialism and all the other 'isms' in which men had put their trust. In consequence Barth and he were left leaderless and in perplexity. "In this situation". . . something very simple happened to us. Our attention was "called anew to the Bible. . . . We had, to be sure, known it "before, but we had read it through the glasses of certain inter-pretations. These interpretations broke up in the same way "that the theology and world-view broke up which had produced "and sustained them. Now we read the Bible in a new way, with "much fewer reservations than before. I do not dare to say "without any; for if that really happened, things would look "still more different. We read it (I dare say this!) more

(22) Barth. Word of God. 101.

"respectfully, more as an eternal word addressed to us and to our
 "times. We criticised it less. We did not seek in it any
 "more our own bourgeois or socialistic, critical or conservative
 "opinions. We read it with the eyes of shipwrecked men whose
 "everything had gone overboard. The Bible appeared in a new
 "light. Beyond all interpretations its genuine word began to
 "speak again; the word of the forgiveness of sins, the gospel
 "of the coming Kingdom, coming not from men but from God. . . .
 "The Bible led us back to the Reformation, and the Bible and the
 "Reformation have held our attention throughout the years." (23)

Besides what he learned from Dostoievsky, Barth was, at
 this period of his life, much influenced by Christoph Blumhardt,
 Franz Overbeck and Søren Kierkegaard. From Blumhardt he learned
 of the advent of the Kingdom of God dependent entirely on God
 Himself who acted with sovereign freedom. (24) From Overbeck
 he caught the conception of an Urgeschichte (25) and a fresh
 understanding of the significance of death. (26) More power-
 ful than either of these was the influence of Kierkegaard, whose
 works had such a vogue in the German-speaking world during the
 War. Through his eyes Barth came to see 'the infinite qualitative
 'difference' between the eternal and the temporal, between God

(23) Thurneysen op. cit. 516-17.

(24) Thurneysen Christoph Blumhard. 1926.

(25) cf. Dickie Revelation & Response 160 ff.

(26) Barth. Die Theologie und die Kirche. 1 ff.

and man. In tracing his spiritual and theological ancestry Barth places Kierkegaard first in a line which runs back through Luther and Calvin to Paul and Jeremiah. (27)

The earliest expression of the change in his thought wrought by the war and the thinkers we have just mentioned is to be found in two lectures which he gave in 1916. The first was entitled *Die Gerechtigkeit Gottes*, and the second *Die neue Welt in der Bibel*. But it is not until the appearance of the second edition of the *Römerbrief* in 1921 that we reach the most characteristic expression of his early views and the book which convinced men that a new star had arisen on the theological horizon. This Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans was no commentary in the ordinary sense of the term, full of learned notes and critical discussions, but an attempt to express afresh for our generation the Pauline message about God, man and human destiny. This does not mean that Barth had turned his back upon the critical, scientific study of the Bible but only that for him the real task of Biblical interpretation began where the critic's task ended, where the interpreter stops to listen to the word which the God who produced the Bible has to speak to our time. The astonishing success of this book in Germany led to many invitations to address conferences (collected in *The Word of God*) and finally a call to the chair of Reformed Theology in Göttingen.

(27) *Word of God*. 195.

His acceptance of this in 1921 seemed to many to herald the downfall of a prophet. "Had he not said that his teaching was not a "theology but only a pinch of spice to be taken with any theology "one might happen to have? With characteristic humour, Barth replied that he had never set out to be a prophet: he had only "been climbing the steeple to get his bearings: and he was more "surprised than anyone else when, in the dark, he accidentally "grasped the bellrope and the great bell of prophecy began to "boom! If such ringing of the alarm was necessary at first, it "was equally necessary to work out in patient, pedestrian style "the principles by which the right preaching of the Gospel and "the right administration of the sacraments in the Church were "to be discriminated from their perversions, and safeguarded "against future errors." (28)

In 1925 Barth moved to Münster in Westphalia as Professor of Dogmatics and New Testament Exegesis and while there published the first volume, of what promised to be a five-volume Dogmatic. (29) This is the most significant document of the second stage in the development and clarification of Barth's thought; the first stage being that of the Römerbrief. In this work he was still under the direct influence of the "existential" movement in philosophy and the "dialectical" movement in theology and his views are

(28) W.M. Horton. Contemporary Continental Theology. 102-103.

(29) Die christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf: Die Lehre vom Worte Gottes. 1927.

moulded to a large extent by the leading ideas of these two schools of thought.

In 1930 Barth became Professor of Systematic Theology in the University of Bonn and there surprised his followers by producing not a second volume of the Dogmatic but a radical revision of the first part of Volume I. In the preface to the revised edition Barth tells us that "the first volume, when it lay before me in print, showed me too clearly how much I myself had to learn historically and materially." (30) When a new edition was called for he found that his experience of twelve years before in re-editing the Römerbrief was repeated: he could and wanted to say the same thing as before, but he could no longer say it in the same way. Thus he was obliged to re-write the book. It had to be done on a larger scale in order to make his positions clear in the light of what he had learnt and by reason of his desire to give his references in full. As to content two significant changes were made. The title was changed. The "christliche Dogmatik" of 1927 gave place to "kirchliche Dogmatik" in 1932. This change from "christlich" to "kirchlich" was made not only to set a good example in not using the word "christlich" too loosely, but also to indicate that dogmatics is not a "free" science but one bound to the sphere of the Church and possible and sensible in it alone. The second change was

(30) Dogmatic I. 1. vii.

the elimination, as far as possible, of everything that might appear to be a philosophical basis, support or even a mere justification of theology. (31) The most noticeable of these eliminations is where he acknowledges a change in his point of view. In section 5 of Chapter I. in the first edition Barth explained that he was passing from phenomenological to existential thinking: that is, from the thinking of one who views things from the outside to the thinking of one who in his existence participates in things. (32) This Barth repudiates in the revised edition. Apart from the question whether he has defined the two types of thought correctly and the question whether one can truly speak of a passing from the one to the other, Barth affirms that they cannot denote "decisive salients on the path" of dogmatic thinking, as seemed there (in 1st edition) to be "taken for granted." (33) The two points of view that he wanted to distinguish are more or less peculiar to all human thought and speech, and a theological chain of thought as such can, because of the greater or less degree of their presence, become neither more correct or incorrect nor more important or unimportant. The change in point of view that he had in mind, therefore, concerned no serious theological decision. Barth also maintained that he meant his statement in a less harmful and more incidental

(31) *ibid.* viii.

(32) *Die christliche Dogmatik.* 47 ff.

(33) *Die kirchliche Dogmatik I. 1.* 141.

way than that in which it was taken. He admits, however, that it was both superfluous and dangerous; superfluous since his doctrine of the Word of God was not in any way based on the existential thought of which he spoke, dangerous because his statement could be erroneously understood as aiming at such a basis. (34) This revised edition of the Dogmatic, with its continuation published in 1938, is the most important document of the third period in Barth's theological development. With it may be grouped three slighter but important volumes, his book on *Auselm*, *Fides Quaerens Intellectum*, which appeared in 1931, the lectures delivered at Utrecht in 1935 and published that same year under the title, *Credo*, and his Gifford Lectures delivered in Aberdeen in 1937 and 1938, *The Knowledge of God and the Service of God*. These are the works on which the present thesis is based.

In 1933 political events began to disturb the German theological world. To many religious-minded Germans the National-Socialist revolution of 1933 under Adolf Hitler brought a new experience of national solidarity and self-respect which seemed to be nothing less than a new revelation of God. It seemed to them no irreverence to couple this new revelation of God, of which Hitler was the prophet, with the supreme revelation of God in Christ somewhat as the Old Testament has always been related

(34) *ibid.* 141 f.

to the New Testament. Indeed, for many, it took the place of the old. Against this movement Barth took his stand in prophetic opposition like Amos at Bethel or Elijah at Mount Carmel, and in his tremendous pamphlet *Theological Existenz heute* he called on the faithful Christians to take to the catacombs rather than bow the knee to this new Baal. The stand of the Confessional Church against the German Christian movement was made with the theological weapons forged by Barth. The struggle, as he saw it, was not one for religious liberty in general, but essentially a struggle for the freedom of the gospel and for the continued existence of true theology and the true Church. (35) It was a struggle which was not directed primarily against the Nazi regime but against those who in Barth's opinion had lost the true conception of theology and of the Church and were exposing them, because of false doctrine and attitudes, to the aggression of the state. (36) Yet Barth also attacked the Nazi regime directly. He emphatically taught that the Church in its outward form as well as in its inward life was subject to Jesus Christ as its only Lord, and that in form and in respect of its message the church was one and the same for all times, races, peoples, states, and cultures; and he just as emphatically rejected the principle of a super-imposed Bishop for the church, the restriction of church membership to a particular race, and the right of the state to determine

(35) *Theologische Existenz heute* 1, 4 and 2, 5.
hereafter cited as T.E.h.

(36) *Theologische Existenz heute* 1. and 7, 9 ff.
hereafter cited as T.E.h.

the message and the form of the Church. (37) He, furthermore, denied that the state was the highest or the only ("total") form of visible, temporal, historical reality, and contended that theology and the Church were the boundary of every state. (38)

Late in 1933 the student-body of the University of Bonn asked all professors to give the Nazi salute at the beginning and close of every lecture. This Barth refused to do explaining that he felt such a salute would be out of place at his theological lectures because of his belief in a Church and a theology free in respect of the state. It was Barth's conception of the sole Lordship of Christ in the Church and of the Church's unqualified responsibility to Him that prompted him at first to refuse to take the special oath of allegiance to the Nazi government that was demanded of all professors in national universities in the autumn of 1934. Only after the oath had been interpreted by a large protestant Church group as presupposing the superiority of loyalty to Christ did Barth feel that he could take it. It was then too late. The date of his trial had been set and he was removed from office on other charges and later expelled from Germany. (39)

Barth returned to Switzerland and was invited to a chair in the University of Basle where he still continues to lecture.

(37) T.E.h. 7. 13 ff.

(38) T.E.h. 1, 40: 7, 14.

(39) See Monsma. Karl Barth's Idea of Revelation. 1937. 160-1.

4. The Three Periods of his Theological Development.

If we leave out of account such early contributions to theological discussion as the articles on "Moderne Theologie und Reichgottesarbeit" (40) and "Der Glaube an den persönlichen Gott" (41) which have only an antiquarian interest, Barth's theological development is seen to fall into three main periods, each associated with a work of major importance.

The first period, which may best be characterised by the term 'prophetic' is that associated with the second edition of the Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (1921) and the addresses collected in 'The Word of God and the Word of Man.' (1924). He does not claim to set forth a new theology. His aim is rather to clear the ground so that men may hear God Himself speak. "It must be equally well remembered as we consider our task," he told a conference of theologians in October 1922, "that only God Himself can speak of God. The task of theology is the Word of God. This means the certain defeat of every theology and every theologian." (42) He regarded his own contribution to theology as merely "a kind of marginal note, a gloss" which he would make to all types of theology. (43) At this period Barth is very doubtful whether theology can ever go beyond that - "Can theology,

(40) Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 1909, 317-321.

(41) " " " " " 1914, 21-32, 65-95.

(42) Word of God. 176-177.

(43) " " " 100.

"should theology, pass beyond prolegomena to Christology? It
 "may be that everything is said in the prolegomena." (44)

In an address on the Doctrinal Task of the Reformed Churches, delivered in September 1923, we find Barth looking ahead in a more positive direction. "For the immediate future
 "the one serious necessity I see for Reformed theology is pre-
 "paratory study towards a new conception of the 'scripture
 "'principle', which should contain much more than that term now
 "implies. (I say preparatory study for this new conception
 "cannot be made or forced!) So far as human endeavour will
 "have any part in making this study successful, we shall need
 "to think through the category of revelation again, and learn
 "again to read the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, from that
 "view point." (45) To this task Barth addressed himself and in
 1927 published the results of his study "Die Lehre vom Worte
 "Gottes. Prolegomena zur christlichen Dogmatik." This second
 period may be called that of the theology of the Word of God.

The most notable feature of this stage in his development was Barth's application of existential philosophy to theology.
 "The Word of God is a conception which is only accessible to
 "existential thought." (46) This means that man is set in the
 centre of theological interest. (47)

(44) Word of God. 178.

(45) Word of God. 199.

(46) Die christliche Dogmatik III.

(47) cf. Die christliche Dogmatik 47 ff.

A further period of study and a better understanding of where it was leading, as he saw it in Gogarten and Brunner, convinced Barth that he was on the wrong road and in the second edition of the Dogmatik (1932) he renounced his former use of existential thought. In this third stage there is, as we shall see later, a strong reaction against that line of thought developed by Gogarten and Brunner which seeks to find a point of contact in man for the Gospel. With Barth the emphasis falls ever more strongly on predestination, God's eternal, sovereign election. Corresponding to the divine predestination there is the elect people of God i.e. the Church. That is why he now characterises his Dogmatic as "Church Dogmatic." This third period may be called that of the theology of the Church. (48)

5. Barth's fundamental Theological Convictions.

The development we have just sketched is not due to any change in Barth's fundamental convictions but to his efforts to give them clearer and more satisfactory expression. His theology is, and always has been, a call to take the question about God in real earnest. "In Christianity, above all in Christian knowledge, it is a question not of this or that, not of things, even though they were the ultimate things, but of the

(48) cf. Cullberg. Das Problem der Ethik in der dialektischen Theologie. 75-6. Hereafter cited as Cullberg: Problem der Ethik.

"understanding or misunderstanding of these three words:- ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ ." (49) Dissatisfied with all that his contemporaries had to say about God and man Barth turned back to the theology of the Reformation, above all to that of Calvin. There he rediscovered the two principles that have ever since determined his theology. "The Reformed Churches . . . were born in a place of prayer to "one God. All the lights by which we variously think we see "were originally fire from one altar. . . . The Reformed creeds "differ from the Augsburg Confession and others by the fact that "in committing themselves, at a measured distance, to the one "object of all thought, they follow a course which, though less "dramatic and effective for theology, at least saves them from "staking everything upon the card of any doctrine. They refer "all doctrine away from itself to the one Object. To them "truth is God - not their thought about God but God Himself "and God alone, as He speaks His own Word in Scripture and in "Spirit." (50) That on the one hand and on the other this:- "The greatness of the fathers (of the Reformation) lay in "their ability to see the gate definitely shut against all human "greatness, and especially their own. It lay in that freedom "from self-concern which made their creeds not expositions of "their own inner experience, remarkable as that was, but something

(49) Die Auferstehung der Toten. 10-11.

(50) Word of God. 234-5.

"quite different: *testificationes conceptae intus fidei.*" (51)

Since this conviction about the sovereignty of God and the finitude of man is constitutive for Barth's theology it is desirable to spend a few moments here.

The doctrine of the sovereign transcendence of God is the central point in Barth's thought. "If I have a system, it is limited to a recognition of what Kierkegaard called the 'infinite qualitative distinction' between time and eternity and to my regarding this as possessing negative as well as positive significance: 'God is in heaven, and thou art on earth'. The relation between such a God and such a man, and the relation between such a man and such a God, is for me the theme of the Bible and the essence of philosophy." (52)

Man cannot by searching find out God, for there is no direct revelation of God in nature, history, or human experience. God is the Unknown, the wholly Other, the invisible Creator between whom and the creation there is a gulf which is unbridgeable from this side. (53) "To us God is the Stranger, the Other, whom we finally encounter along the whole frontier of our knowledge." (54) God is that being "Who is distinguished qualitatively from men and from everything human, and must never

(51) *ibid.* 239.

(52) Romans. Eng.Tr. 10.

(53) Word of God. 177-8.

(54) Romans. Eng.Tr. 318.

"be identified with anything which we name, or experience, or
 "conceive or worship, as God." (55) Barth has spent nearly
 twenty years in the professional chair since he wrote those words.
 His language has changed somewhat, but his aim remains the same,
 viz. to bear witness to the sovereign transcendence of God against
 all who would make God in their own image. "We have not to draw
 "our knowledge of who God is from what we think about eternity,
 "infinity, omnipotence and invisibility as conceptions which
 "bound our thought. On the contrary, we have to draw our know-
 "ledge of eternity, infinity, omnipotence and invisibility from
 "what we can know about God, from what God has said to us about
 "Himself. . . . If we do not wish to end by really defining
 "ourselves, when we think that we are defining God, we can only
 "take the second way and therefore hold fast to the incomprehen-
 "ible majesty in which God meets us in His revelation, the majesty
 "of His person as Father, Son and Holy Spirit." (56)

Barth's views on the finitude of man are no less clear.
 Speaking at a conference in October 1922 on "The Word of God as
 "the Task of Theology" Barth defined the human situation thus:
 "We do not understand the profession of the ministry unless we
 "understand it as an index, a symptom say rather an omen, of a
 "perplexity which extends over the whole range of human endeavour,
 "present and future. It is a perplexity felt by man simply by

(55) *ibid.* 330-331.

(56) *The Knowledge of God.* 33.

"virtue of his being a man and has nothing to do with his being
 "moral or immoral, spiritual or worldly, godly or ungodly. How-
 "ever conscious or unconscious of his situation he may be, man
 "cannot escape his humanity, and humanity means limitation,
 "finitude, creaturehood, separation from God." (57) It is only,
 however, when God by a miracle of divine grace speaks His Word
 to man that man gets a true measure of his condition. "When
 "I come to believe (and only then) I see the problem of my being
 "as a man. Otherwise, as a sinner living undisturbed in the
 "dream of my likeness to God, I could deceive myself about my
 "condition. But the Word of God sets to man as such his limits
 "and thereby determines him. That is to say it sets him in
 "contrast to God who 1. as the Creator, 2. as the Holy and Merciful
 "One, 3. as He who is in Himself Eternal, is simply and
 "wholly not man and not as man is." (58)

This Word of God which thus reveals to man his true state
 means for him two things. It means first, judgment. In its
 light man comes to the realisation of his own finitude, sinfulness
 and separation from God. This is the true source of our
 knowledge to which we must ever return, viz. "that we men are
 "unable to reflect on the ultimate, deepest and truest meaning
 "of our being because that meaning has been irretrievably lost." (59)

(57) Word of God. 189-190.

(58) Theologie und Kirche. 370.

(59) Die Theologie und der heutige Mensch. Z.d.Z. 1930. 375.

Man knows that his life is like the journey of a wanderer in the night. "He lives yet he must die. He knows of truths, aims, "and meanings of one kind and another, but the more he knows the "more does the knowledge of the truth, the aim and meaning of "the whole evade him. He knows the good that ought to be, no, "that he ought to do, but the better he knows it, the better he "knows that he neither does it nor will do it. He dreams the "dream of his own likeness to God and knows that the dream is "no mere dream but the truth, though hidden and lost. He opens "his eyes to find himself a captive in this mysterious state, "midway between the angel and the beast, that we call humanity."

(60) Thus man comes to understand that the contradiction which he finds in his own life is not part of the divine order. It is a disorder which arises out of his separation from God. It cannot be interpreted as a stage in the divine plan for in that case man would have in himself the resources for overcoming the contradiction and be independent of God. Nor is it something which has come upon man from without and for which we have no responsibility. We are not the victims of fate but the product of our own responsible acts. "Our existence is torn in two, "because we ourselves have torn it." (61) While the Word of God which man hears means judgment it is also a word of reconciliation

(60) Chr. Dogmatik. 68.

(61) *ibid.* 72.

and hope. Man knows himself to be a wanderer, involved in the conflict of flesh with spirit because he stands before God. The very fact that he knows of this contradiction in his life is full of hope because he could not know that unless God Himself had spoken to him. But God's Word which reveals to man his condition is also an answer to the question it raises. "It is the word from home to the wanderer telling him that home is open to him. It is God Himself who follows the man alienated from Him and draws near to him. . . . God is above the contradiction in which we stand. God is the Creator at the beginning and the Redeemer at the end, as both He is the Lord of the peace which we do not possess, but which He as the Reconciler has established in our midst. As the Reconciler He speaks His Word to the wanderer, a reminder of Creation and a promise of Redemption, giving man grace to recall the one and to hope for the other, grace to believe and to live in faith."

(62) For that reason preaching proceeds from God's prevenient Love. Its task is not to bring home to men their godlessness and inner contradiction but, with axiomatic assurance, to reckon them to God.

6. The Doctrine of Revelation Central.

For a theology grounded in the conviction that between

(62) *ibid.* 75-6.

the Creator and the creature there yawns a gulf impassible from the human side the problem of revelation is very important and pressing. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that this is the subject of Barth's *Prolegomena to Church Dogmatics* to which he devotes fifteen hundred pages.

The word revelation is very loosely used to-day and in general it connotes a divine activity which corresponds to the human activity of discovery. "No valid distinction can be drawn between discovery and revelation," says H. L. Goudge. "No revelation can be received without attention being paid to it, nor would the effort to attain truth be successful, unless the one Source of truth were willing to reward it." (63) According to this idea the whole world of natural phenomena may be the scene of God's self-manifestation. No definite line can be drawn between what is revelation and what is not. "The word revelation is stretched to cover all the discoveries, inventions, perceptions and intuitions which enlarge and extend our experience. Religion itself is made parallel with these perceptions and discoveries of the human mind and spirit, and it is often defended as a method of approach to reality equally valid with others. . . . The scientist has his contribution, the artist his, and the religious man his." (64) This is the idea of revelation which first found classical expression in Schleiermacher's *Reden*,

(63) *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*. Vol. 10. 746.

(64) Cawfield. *Revelation and the Holy Spirit*. 11.

and which has now become the generally accepted view. The religious man who accepts this idea of revelation can no longer claim to be a witness to a truth which men cannot attain of themselves, but becomes a mere fellow-seeker after a truth which is open to all.

Barth's whole theology is directed against such a view. His aim is to re-establish the strict and essential meaning which revelation has in Christian faith, viz. a drawing back of the veil to disclose something which could not otherwise be known at all. It involves a real movement on the part of God not merely the opening of men's eyes to see what was there all the time.

Revelation for Barth is God Himself as He makes Himself known to man in virtue of His sovereign grace. "According to "Scripture God's revelation is God's own immediate speaking, not "to be distinguished from the act of this speaking, therefore not "to be distinguished from God Himself, from the divine I which "confronts man in this act in which it addresses him as 'thou'. "Revelation is Dei loquentis persona." (65)

Twice the Christian Church has had to fight for this truth. In the fourth century it was for the doctrine of the Trinity, i.e. the acknowledgment of the divinity of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit. In the sixteenth century it was for the doctrine of free grace, i.e. the recognition that in the justification of the sinner God gives Himself. To-day, Barth thinks,

(65) Dogmatic I. 1. 349.

the same conflict has entered on a third stage. "The Church all over the world to-day is busy with the problem of the secularisation of the modern man. It might perhaps be better to concern itself at least first with the problem of its own secularisation, and secularisation indubitably prevails where man only knows more about man and no longer knows about God's revelation. But does man know about God's revelation where man understands by revelation hardly more than a mere change, an improvement - probably a very arbitrarily conceived change and improvement in man, where man no longer knows that the revelation is God Himself? And therefore no longer knows about its mystery, its authority, its judgment! No longer knows about its certainty and uniqueness! No longer knows about the separation, and therefore no longer about the relation of God and man! Is the Church surprised that she has little to say to the modern man? If she continues on this course she will have less and less to say to him. Perhaps to-day it is high time, and more important than anything else, to take up with fresh seriousness the old fight for the old truth, the fight of Nicaea and of the Reformation: God's revelation is God Himself, the one, present, eternal and living God." (66) On this question of the uniqueness of the Biblical revelation see also Thurneysen's valuable essay on "Offenbarung in Religionsgeschichte und Bibel." (67)

(66) T.E.h. 9. 21-22.

(67) Zwischen den Zeiten. 1928, 453-477.

Barth's doctrine of revelation is therefore a doctrine of the Word of God. This, he claims, is the true evangelical doctrine which must be maintained against the heresies of Roman catholicism on the one hand and Modernism on the other. (68)

7. The Word of God.

a. Its threefold form.

a. The Word of God is to be found where, within the Church, that language about God is heard which Barth calls proclamation. Not all that is spoken in Church is proclamation. Prayer, singing and confession of faith are a response to proclamation rather than proclamation itself, and the teaching work of the Church, in its instruction of youth, and its theology, is likewise to be distinguished from it. Proclamation he defines as "human language" in and through which God Himself speaks, like a king through the "mouth of his herald, which moreover is meant to be heard and "apprehended as language in and through which God Himself speaks, "and so heard and apprehended in faith as the divine decision "upon life and death, as the divine judgment and the divine "acquittal, the eternal law and the eternal gospel together." (69) This takes place in preaching and the sacraments. Preaching Barth defines as the attempt of one, called to this service by the Church, to express in his own words, an interpretation of a

(68) Dogmatic I. 1. 39 ff.

(69) Dogmatic I. 1. 57.

portion of the Biblical testimony to revelation. Thus the preacher seeks to make intelligible to the men of his own day the promise of God's revelation, reconciliation and calling, as they are to be expected here and now. The sacrament is an accompanying and confirming symbolic act. (70)

Whether preaching becomes proclamation or not depends not on man's earnestness or zeal but upon the Word of God itself. This is the presupposition of all proclamation and they are related in four decisive ways.

The Word of God is the commission, on the basis of which the proclamation of the Church rests. Human motives for preaching cannot be eliminated, but it is this positive divine behest which makes it real proclamation. The Word of God is also the object which must be given to proclamation. It is never an object present to human perception in the same way as the objects of all other perception but only as a promise in virtue of which God wills to be the object of this language and is so from time to time at His good pleasure. The Word of God is, further, the criterion in virtue of which proclamation is known to be true. This never passes into our control, but abides with God alone. Finally, the Word of God is the event itself, in which proclamation becomes real proclamation. In this event human language is not set aside but is rather laid hold upon and

(70) Ibid. 61-2.

possessed by the Word of God. In and through man's language about God, God Himself speaks. (71)

b. Behind the proclamation of the Church, Barth seeks the Word of God in its written form, in Scripture. In Scripture we have the witness to the Word of God of the prophets and apostles to whom it was originally given. This is the external standard by which the Church's proclamation is tested and for it there can be no substitute. If we ask why the Bible takes up this position and what makes it and no other document to be the canon of Holy Scripture, Barth replies. "It is the canon because it "has imposed itself as such upon the Church and invariably does "so." (72) It is the witness and proclamation of the men who have longed for, expected and hoped for Jesus Christ who is "Immanuel", "God with us" and of those who saw, heard and handled this Word of life. As such it holds out to us the promise that He will be so for us also. Whoever so hears this witness in such a way that he lays hold on its promise and says Yes to it, believes. That this takes place is a matter of divine grace just as much as is the presence of the Word of God in our present day proclamation. It is not the text of Scripture which constitutes God's Word. It is only God's Word in so far as God lets it be His Word by speaking through it. He is not bound to

(71) *ibid.* 98-111.

(72) *ibid.* 120.

this Word of Scripture, He can use it, or not use it, as He wills. Hence the statement, "The Bible is God's Word," is always a confession of faith. (73)

c. Church proclamation and the Bible are only revelation in a derived and mediate way. Behind them there stands that event to which they both bear witness, the coming of Jesus Christ who is the Word of God in its original and final form. "This fulness of time, which is identical with Jesus Christ, this pure event in relation to which everything else is not yet an event or has ceased to be one, this 'it is finished!' this Deus dixit, to which there are no analogies, is the revelation attested in the Bible. To understand the Bible would mean, from beginning to end and from verse to verse, to understand how everything in it is related to that as its invisible-visible centre." (74)

To speak here of a "revealed Word of God" is really tautological since "revelation signifies the Word of God itself, the act of its utterance." (75) To this revelation both Bible and proclamation appeal. They cannot produce it but only bear witness to it in the faith that Jesus Christ, the Word of God will speak in and through that witness.

d. These three forms of the Word of God are not to be regarded as three separate Words of varied value. It is the

(73) *ibid.* 111-124.

(74) *ibid.* 131.

(75) *ibid.* 133.

same Word of God in all its forms. Though revelation in its first form, Jesus Christ, is that which establishes the other two, it is only known in and through the Bible and proclamation, and when these become the Word of God they too are actually the Word of God. The three forms cannot be isolated one from another nor can any distinction of degree be made between them. (76)

8. The Word of God.

b. Its nature.

When we ask what is the nature of the Word of God which is spoken to us in these three forms, we find that we can no more answer that question directly than we can give a direct answer to the question of the nature of God in general. We can, however, by reflection on the three forms which it takes infer how it is. "That 'how' is the reflected image, attainable by man, of the "unattainable nature of God." (77)

a. The Word of God in all its three forms is speech. This, Barth contends, is the only possible translation of the term Logos and goes on to ask what it means if the Word of God means originally and irrevocably, God speaks.

1. It means first that the Word is spiritual. It employs physical media as in preaching and sacraments, in the letter of Scripture, and in the physical form of Jesus Christ. But

(76) *ibid.* 124-140.

(77) *ibid.* 150.

these physical media ~~are~~ subordinate to the spiritual nature. God's speech is a rational event in which person speaks with person, reason to reason. It has the simple spiritual power of truth and is related to hearing, understanding and obedience.

2. It is, further, personal speech, God Himself speaking to us in Jesus Christ, His Word made flesh. This identification of God's Word with God's Son makes it impossible for us to accept the Roman Catholic and Old Protestant conceptions of God's Word as a body of revealed truth. It also makes it impossible to think of God as bound to the verbal form of Scripture. He is free to use it or not use it or to create for Himself new verbal forms.

3. God's Word is also a Word with a purpose. It has the character of an address directed to man. God's Word is never a general truth which we can hand on to others. It is always a concrete, individual word addressed personally to this man or that which has something special to say to him in his present situation. As such it is not a Word which we can say to ourselves but one which comes from God Himself who aims it at us. It is the Word of the Lord which tells us something new that otherwise we could never have heard. This is the first of the four points of view from which we have to consider the real content of the Word of God. The second is that as the Word of Our Creator it comes home to us as no other word can. As the

Word of our Creator it signifies His intention of maintaining and establishing anew the original relationship between us and Him, a relationship which our rebellion has destroyed and which we cannot renew of ourselves. It is the Word of the Reconciler, of God who by a second creation sets up His covenant anew with us in judgment and grace. In the fourth place it is the Word by which God promises Himself to man as the content of man's future i.e. as Him who cometh to fulfil and complete the relationship founded between us and Him at the Creation, renewed and confirmed at the reconciliation. In other words, God's Word is the Word of our Redeemer. As such what God says to us always remains a secret which is revealed only in the event of his actual speaking to us. (78)

b. With man speech and act do not always go together. But God's Word is always God's act. To ask for an act which corresponds to God's Word only shows that we have not yet heard God speak. For the Word of God always makes history. We have only to remember here all that is said in both Old and New Testaments about the Word of God to realise how true this is. It has creative power. "God said, Let there be light, "and there was light." (Gen. I. 3.) (cf. Psalm XXXIII. 9. and John IV. 50).

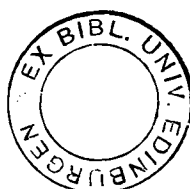
(78) *ibid.* 149-162.

As God's Act the Word of God has the character of what Barth calls "contingent contemporaneousness." (79) In the event of revelation Jesus Christ by the free, gracious act of God becomes our contemporary. The Word of God which was spoken in a certain historical setting illic et tunc becomes a Word spoken to us in our particular situation hic et nunc. Thus the Word of God is always an eternal moment in the present. Where this happens and Jesus Christ becomes contemporaneous with us through Scripture and proclamation we come under His Lordship. The ideas of election, revelation, separation, calling and new birth all signify not only the promise of God but also His claim upon men by which God binds them to Himself. "If we regard the Word of God from its origin in revelation in Jesus Christ, as the summary of the grace of God, grace means simply that man is no longer left to himself, but is given into the hand of God." (80)

That God's Word is God's act means in the third place that it is a decision. It is not an event which is dependent on and conditioned by other events as all natural and historical phenomena are. It is the free act of God Himself who is above all things and subject to none. There is no category or general concept which we can apply to the Word of God. The only concept of the Word of God is the name of God which is identical with

(79) *ibid.* 164.

(80) *ibid.* 170.



God Himself. That the Word of God is decision means, further, that it comes to this or that definite man as a call, an election which decides whether to the grace of faith and righteousness or to the judgment of unbelief and sin. This aspect of Barth's doctrine will be discussed in detail at a later stage.

c. In the third place to say that in the Word of God God Himself speaks, means that we acknowledge its mystery. Here Barth warns us against imagining we can say with any assurance or finality what the Word of God is. Even in revelation God remains hidden in His Word.

The Word of God remains a mystery in its worldliness, i.e. in the sense of belonging to this world. "When God speaks "to man, this happening is never so marked off from the rest of "what happens that it might not promptly be also interpreted as "a part of this other happening." (81) The Church is a social institution, preaching a form of address, the Bible an historical document and Jesus Christ the founder of a religion about whom it is difficult to get historical information, but who appears a somewhat commonplace Jewish Rabbi. Even the Biblical miracles do not escape. The Word of God always comes to us in a form which, as such, is not the Word of God, and does not betray that it is the Word of God. The Word of God is the true

(81) *ibid.* 188.

paradox, for in its self-presentation it differs from all others in that here matter and form have no correspondence, direct or indirect, but are in contradiction. Moreover our knowledge of the Word of God is through our fallen reason which further distorts its form. Where God's Word is revealed this takes place not so much through the world in which it must happen as in spite of it. Only the Word of God can interpret itself. But this worldliness is not to be regarded as a disagreeable accident. It is a necessity for it is only so that God can speak to men who are in the world and who are through and through worldly. It is an evidence of the grace of God who in His Word wills to come to us just where we are.

Again, the Word of God remains a mystery in its one-sidedness. Here, though the word itself has been abandoned, we are dealing with what Earth elsewhere calls dialectic. (82) The Word of God never reveals itself to us as a whole, but always one side at a time, the form without the content, or the content without the form, while the other remains hidden. We can never be in a position to synthesise form and content of the Word of God. The two are one for us only in God-given faith. But faith means acknowledging man's impotence to synthesise form and content and a willingness to be led by God through form to content and again through content to form. Faith is

(82) Word of God. 206ff. Christliche Dogmatik 456ff.

thus the recognition that God does not in any way give Himself into our hands, but keeps us in His hand.

The Word of God is, in the third place, a mystery in its spirituality. The Word of God is actually heard and believed in by man only where the Word itself creates the hearing and the faith, i.e. in the miracle of the Holy Spirit. This takes place, of course, in definite human experiences, attitudes and thoughts but it is not so bound up with them and dependent upon them that their existence ensures the presence of the Word or their absence frustrates its power. We cannot produce the conditions which necessarily assure us that the Word of God will be heard. There is no method of Biblical exegesis which can make the testimony to revelation in the Bible articulate and no pulpit eloquence which can open men's ears to His voice. Faith is the work of the Holy Spirit. The spirituality of God's Word in this sense is dealt with more fully in the next section where Barth discusses how the Word of God is known. Meanwhile Barth summarises the discussion thus: "If with regard to the "event of hearing the Word of God we point not to a datum lying "within man's existence, nor to the delimitation of all data of "man's existence, nor, finally, to the possibility of a contin- "gent experience, but only to faith, and that means, to the Holy "Spirit, we thus establish what was said at the beginning of this "section, that the question, what is the Word of God? can only

"be answered by indicating its nature through an interpretation of its threefold form. Thus: What is the nature of the Word of God? Answer: It is on our lips and in our hearts, in the mystery of the Spirit who is the Lord." (83)

9. The Word of God.

c. How it is known.

Since the important questions dealt with by Barth in his next chapter, that on "The Knowability of the Word of God," are to receive detailed and critical consideration at a later stage only a very brief indication of Barth's views will be given here.

Barth begins with the caution that the question is not, How do men know the Word of God? but presupposing that knowledge, which is God's gift and in His own hands, How can men know the Word of God?

The concept of knowledge (Erkenntnis) used at this point must be taken in such a general and indefinite way as to allow for every correction, limitation, or inversion that may be required, since it may be found that knowledge of the Word of God is unlike that of any other object and can only be defined from the side of its object.

Since knowledge of the Word of God is an event which concerns and affects the reality of man there must be a corresponding

(83) Dogmatic I. 1, 212.

ability on the part of man. Barth denies, however, that this is an ability which man possesses by nature. God's Word being God's grace, man has no power to know it of himself. The possibility of knowing the Word of God is one which comes from the Word itself as a quite inconceivable novelty (*novum*) in direct contrast to all man's ability and capacity.

Thus Barth rejects the modernist view which seeks, in the manner of Decartes, to prove the existence of God from man's certainty of himself. In theology, he contends, the true procedure is "to base self-certainty on God-certainty and to "measure it by God-certainty and so to begin with God-certainty "without waiting for this beginning to be legitimised by self-certainty." (Dogmatic I.1, 223 Eng. Tr.) This inversion is not the outcome of any philosophy but arises solely out of Barth's understanding of the Word of God as "the living, personal, and free God." (84)

Experience of the Word of God means determination of their existence as men by that Word. This takes place always in an act of human self-determination, but it is not as this act that it is experience of the Word of God. Nor is this experience a matter of co-operation between divine and human determinations. The being together of God and man as it occurs in experience of the Word of God is not a togetherness on the same

level, which can be analysed and understood. Man's self-determination in this event is subordinate to determination by God and needs this divine determination in order to be experience of His Word. This determination affects the whole man and no aspect of man's life, feeling, intellect, or will, is to be singled out for special preference. (85) (See further

Barth then asks In what does experience of the Word of God, i.e. determination of the whole self-determining man by the Word of God, consist, and answers his question by developing the concept of acknowledgment (Anerkennung). He relates this to the nine characteristics of the nature of the Word of God which we have already outlined in section 8. (on this see further

At this point Barth inserts a warning against the view, so widely held among Protestant theologians, that in experience of the Word of God man comes to possess a "content of divine "spirit" and thereby becomes an independent object of theological interest and a second source of knowledge of the Word of God. This he holds involves a wrong conception of the Church, of preaching, and of dogmatics, and contradicts the Word of God as it comes to us in revelation, Scripture and preaching, as well as the real experience of the man to whom this Word of God is addressed. Real experience of the Word of God involves the

(85) *ibid.* 226-233.

recognition that its basis and certainty are outside itself.

This in turn involves the recognition that here we are concerned with the collapse and death of man and the emergence of a new reborn man. This takes place in the miracle of faith. (86)

In his treatment of faith (which is fully dealt with later in our discussion (on Barth's Doctrine of Faith pp. 212-222) Barth makes three points.

1. Faith is an experience, a concretely fixable temporal act of a particular person, but it is true faith only in virtue of the Word to which faith is related because it gives itself to faith as its object.

2. In faith there takes place a conformity of man with God. This does not mean the deification of man but his adaption to the Word. This constitutes the 'point of contact' between God and man.

3. Man as a believer is wholly dependent upon the object of his belief. While man is by no means passive in the act of faith he does not create his faith or maintain it. Faith is the creation and the gift of the Word.

Thus Barth concludes: "The possibility of knowing the Word of God is God's miracle on and in us, just as much as are the Word itself and the utterance of it." (87)

(86) *ibid.* 241-260.

(87) *ibid.* 282.

10. The Word of God.

d. Its content.

When we turn to ask what is the content of revelation? Barth replies: "According to Scripture God's revelation is God's own immediate speaking, not to be distinguished from the act of this speaking, therefore not to be distinguished from God Himself, from the divine I which confronts man in this act in which it addresses him as 'thou'. Revelation is Dei loquentis persona." (88) The content of God's revelation is not something distinct from God which nevertheless tells us something about Him, but God Himself. This is only strictly true of revelation in its primal form and not of Scripture and proclamation. In the latter the Word of God is mediated through the human persons of prophets and apostles, expositors and preachers. Their identity with God is an indirect one. In other words the content of revelation is Jesus Christ, who is Immanuel, God with us. (89) Hence there is no higher criterion by which it can be judged or measured. Its reality and truth are wholly and in every respect within itself. Our attitude towards revelation may be one of obedience or disobedience, belief or unbelief, but we cannot take our stand at a point from which we can judge it.

This may be summed up in the analytical judgment that

(88) *ibid.* 349.

(89) *ibid.* 121.

"God reveals Himself as the Lord". (90) The distinction between form and content cannot be applied to the Biblical conception of revelation. "Lordship is present in revelation, "just because its reality and truth are so utterly grounded in "itself, because it need be actualised and legitimated in no "other way than by the fact of its occurrence, because it is "not in any relation to anything else, but is revelation by "its own agency, because it is the self-contained novum we "spoke of. Lordship means freedom." (91)

An analysis of this statement, God reveals Himself as the Lord, brings to light a three-fold sense in which this may be said of God. He reveals Himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus this statement may be considered as the root of the doctrine of the Trinity. (92) Historically considered these three aspects of God's self-revelation as Lord have not equal weight or importance. It is the second, the act of revelation in Jesus Christ which is the real theme of the Biblical witness, and in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity the divinity of Christ was the primary concern. (93) When Barth speaks of this statement being the root of the doctrine of the Trinity he means something negative and positive. Negatively, the doctrine of the Trinity is not directly

(90) *ibid.* 351.

(91) *ibid.* 352.

(92) *ibid.* 353, 361.

(93) *ibid.* 361-2, 121.

identical with revelation or the witness to it. It is a document of the Church's struggle to maintain a pure witness. Positively, the doctrine of the Trinity is indirectly identical with revelation. It is not a theory imposed upon the Church at a later date but is implicit in the Biblical witness to revelation from the beginning. It provides the necessary and relevant analysis of revelation for a right interpretation of it. Barth, therefore, sets forth the content of revelation in a detailed exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity.

11. Conclusion.

However intricate Barth's doctrine of revelation as the Word of God may appear to be it will be found to be a thorough and consistent expression of his primary theological conviction that God is One who stands over against the world as its sovereign Lord. "Fundamentally, his entire theology is contained "in the first commandment, 'I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt "not have any other Gods beside me.' Every single sentence "of his writings can be understood as the application of this "notion to a particular phase of the relation between God and the "world." (94)

Barth stands at all points firmly against any attempt to draw God into the sphere of human possibility. This is as

(94) Paul Tillich "What is Wrong with the Dialectical "Theology" The Journal of Religion Vol. XV. 129. cf. Barth. Das erste Gebot als theologisches Axiom Z.d.Z. 1933. 297 ff.

true of his latest writings as it was of the Römerbrief in which the relation of God to man was expressed in the sentence "God is in heaven and thou art on earth." Between God and man there is a gulf which man is unable of himself to bridge. If it were possible for him to do this he would be able to control his relation to God and thus would have power over God Himself. But no creature has this power and the claim to possess it shows that man has turned from the living and true God to worship idols. In Christian theology and practice this has developed along two lines. In all mystical and humanistic theology there is an alleged blending of the divine and human spirit. This blending of the divine and human spirit in mysticism takes place in the depths of the human spirit. If man will but sink deep enough into himself he will find himself in immediate contact with the divine, for fundamentally man is a spark of the divine essence. Against this Barth sets the doctrine of the Word of God spoken not by us, but to us. It stands over against man requiring faith and obedience, not submergence and ecstasy. It is possible to regard faith as a capacity possessed by man in virtue of which he is able to recognise God in nature, history and human activity. Barth, as we shall see in detail later, rejects this, maintaining that man has no natural capacity by whose help he can gain any knowledge of God, and that faith itself is God's work in man. It is only through the working of God's

Spirit in us that we can attain to knowledge of God. This Spirit is God Himself and is not to be confused with our own spirit. Thus, according to Barth, nothing can be learnt about God from the history of religion or from any of man's activities in philosophy, science, art, etc. These are all the expression of man's own nature which as that of a sinner is radically separated from that of God. Barth is opposed therefore to the whole trend of modern protestant theology and his whole aim is to combat the heresies of liberal theology and to revive the theology of the Early Church and the Reformation. He calls us back to take revelation seriously as the Word of God in Scripture for which liberal theology has substituted the conception of the self-developing religious consciousness of humanity. God speaks to us not through our own spiritual development but to our spirit and, since our spirit is under the law of sin, that means against our spirit. He does so in the Word in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and in that alone. What constitutes the Word of God in Scripture is not the letter of Scripture, nor the piety or religious genius of the writers, nor the historical development which it describes, nor the moral principles it inculcates, but only the fact that it bears witness to the revelation made in Christ. This witness can only be heard as God Himself makes it audible to us through His Holy Spirit. Again Barth rejects the picture of Jesus as the religious hero

or genius which modern Protestantism has substituted for that of the divine Christ, the Second Person in the Trinity. (95) In his latest books, particularly in *Dogmatik I. 2*, Barth recognises more adequately the truth and significance of the Incarnation. He vigorously rejects, however, any attempt to explain how Christ is truly God and truly man. "If God's revelation be the way from the veiling to the unveiling of the eternal Word, from manger and cross to resurrection and ascension - how then could it be other than this becoming man, becoming flesh, of God?" (96) This much we may know, but how Christ is truly God and truly man is God's mystery "Christology deals with God's revelation as a mystery. It must first know this mystery as such, and secondly recognise it as such." (97)

In the third place Barth calls us to recognise that man is a sinner. In doing so he rejects the view of man as a self-developing personality and the minimising of sin which is characteristic of liberal theology. For Barth sin has so radically transformed nature and man that even if there were natural laws given at the creation for the ordering of human life we are no longer capable of perceiving them and living by them. All our human distinctions are from God's standpoint of no account.

(95) *Dogmatik I, 2*. 71. 150 f.

(96) *ibid.* 48.

(97) *ibid.* 144 ff.

If modern theology has lost the distinction between the divine and human spirit it has also mingled the divine and human kingdoms. This is the idolatry of Catholicism on the one hand and the social gospel of modern Protestantism on the other.

Again Barth stands for the separation of these two kingdoms. The Kingdom of God is a purely transcendent entity which is not constructed by men but comes to them from God. Human culture and history are human possibilities. They can furnish us neither with standards for Christian teaching nor norms for Christian conduct. The Kingdom of God is an eschatological reality never present in human history. Even the Church is not the Kingdom though it is the company of those "elected, called, "directed and comforted" by Jesus Christ in the hidden work of the Holy Spirit. (98) It is a historical reality subject like others to error and change. This is true of all the Church's activity.

"Thus the Barthian theology, from first to last, preserves "the sovereign prerogative of God as expressed in the first "Commandment. God's sovereignty is not blended with any form "of human existence and action. Unquestionably, this seems to "me to be the truth that is preserved not only in the Barthian "theology but in any theology that deserves the name. A criticism "of this position would be not only a criticism of Barth but of the "Bible, the Church, and theology in general." (99)

(98) The Knowledge of God. 157.

(99) Tillich. op. cit. 135.

C. THE DIVISIONS OF THE DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY.

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C. THE DIVISIONS OF THE DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY

1. No "Barthian" School.

H.M. Müller in a review of Barth's "Christliche Dogmatik" in 1928 came to the conclusion that "the leaders of the dialectical Theology are today more at variance among themselves than the political generals in China." (1) It was five years later, however, before this disunity resulted in an open break. Forced by the political events of the year 1933, with their inevitable repercussions in the ecclesiastical life of Germany, to take sides, the little group, who in the autumn of 1922 had begun collaboration in *Zwischen den Zeiten*, found themselves unable to maintain a common front. (2)

This, however regrettable, was neither surprising nor altogether unexpected to those who had followed the development of this theological movement. There never was a "Barthian School" in the sense in which we speak of a "Ritschlian School". The dialectical theology was not unified by any dogmatic or philosophical principle but sprang out of the religious and theological situation which has already been described.

What united the various members of the group was a definite religious and theological outlook which had its roots in a fresh

(1) *Theologische Blätter*. Juli 1928.

(2) *Zwischen den Zeiten*. 1933. 536 - 554.

discovery of God's unconditioned sovereignty and a new understanding of man's nature and its limitations. (3)

So long as they were fighting against the current trend in theological thought they could stand side by side but when they began to work out their own theological system each went his own way.

Among the leaders Barth, Gogarten, Brunner and Bultmann, two quite distinct tendencies were at work. The religious experience which shook them out of their "dogmatic slumbers" meant a new conception of God and of man. Some sought to develop their theology on purely theological lines without concerning themselves about philosophical and anthropological presuppositions, others sought their point of departure in the new understanding of man which they had reached. On the former side stand Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, on the latter, Friedrich Gogarten and Rudolf Bultmann. (4)

Our main concern in this thesis is with Barth and Brunner but a word about the views of Gogarten and Bultmann is desirable at this point.

2. Friedrich Gogarten.

Friedrich Gogarten in the introduction to his controversial book against Barth, *Gericht oder Skepsis*, acknowledges that he

(3) W. Wiesner. *Das Offenbarungsproblem in der dialektischen Theologie*. 28 ff.

Gogarten. *Karl Barths Dogmatik Theologische Rundschau*. 1929. 80.

Brunner. *Natur und Gnade*. 4.

Gogarten. *Gericht oder Skepsis*. 13.

(4) Wiesner op. cit. 29 f. 76.

Gogarten. *Gericht oder Skepsis*. 7. 10.

shared with Barth a common aim, that of giving the Word of God its true place, (5) and a common opposition to both Liberal and Positive Schools in German Protestantism. (6) From the beginning, however, each went his own way. Barth became more and more concerned with exclusively theological questions, while Gogarten sought to understand the presuppositions of modern thought, which led him ever deeper into the great political and ethical questions of the hour. The outcome was that in the controversies within the Church in 1933, over the relation of Church and State, they took opposite sides, Gogarten aligning himself with the "German Christians" and acknowledging a revelation of God in the national history. This Barth regarded as the complete betrayal of the Gospel and involving a definite break in their collaboration in *Zwischen den Zeiten*. (7)

Gogarten is a North German, born in Dortmund in 1887. He belongs to the Lutheran Church and, like Barth, began as a minister, first in the Rhineland and in Bremen, then from 1917 to 1925 in Stelzendorf in Thuringia, and later in Dorndorf on the Saale. While in Dorndorf he also held a lectureship at Jena (1927). He has

(5) Gogarten op. cit. 11.

(6) Gogarten op. cit. 10 - 11.
Barth *Z.d.Z.* 1933. 536.

(7) Barth. *Abschied.* *Z.d.Z.* 1933. 539 f.
Gogarten op. cit. 8.

since been Professor Theology at(~~Breslau---~~^{*}~~is now--at~~) Göttingen. (8)

Gogarten's first book, "Fichte als religiöser Denker" (1914), was an attempt "to translate Fichte's thought into our own speech", under the conviction that "he has built us a way on which we can "go." This shows Gogarten as a convinced believer in the divinity of man and the divine immanence. That Gogarten became in time one of the most radical critics of the idealism in which he began is due to four factors. For a time he was interested in Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy which appeared to offer to modern man not only a way to knowledge of higher worlds, but also the way to a better order of life. His study of Steiner convinced him, however, of the hopelessness of idealism as a way to 'actuality'. "Man goes no way to "God. Man has either nothing at all to do with Him, or man stands "directly before Him There is no such thing as an inter-"mediate state, nearer or further." (9)

Gogarten's own passionate and persistent search for "reality" or "actuality" is the second, and perhaps the most important factor in his development. (10) The third was the historical events of the war and post-war period, which exercised so profound an influence

(8) Koepp, W. Die gegenwärtige Geisteslage und die dialektische Theologie. 34 f.

McConnachie. Friedrich Gogarten. Expository Times. Vol. 43 391.
Minerva.

(9) Gottlob Wieser. Friedrich Gogarten. 15.

(10) Wieser. op. cit. 14.

* I have since discovered that McConnachie was mistaken here. Gogarten went from Jena to Göttingen.

on all European thinkers. Fourthly, through a fresh study of Luther he came to perceive the peculiar character of Christian thought in contrast to all the modern search for God. He entered with gratitude into this inheritance and about the same time as Barth, though in complete independence of him, he passed through the same crisis. A year after Barth gave his epoch-making address at Tambach in 1929, on "The Christian in Society", Gogarten startled the "Friends of the Christian World" at their annual gathering on the Wartburg in October 1920 with an address on "The Crisis of our Civilisation". We were experiencing a convulsion, he said, of which the War was only a premonition. The world as it was had fallen from God and was under judgment. That was the crisis of our civilisation. Either our Christian religion was the soul of this civilisation, the finest expression of its powers, in which case its life was bound up with it, and it would perish with it; or we had a religion which was the absolute and abiding crisis of this and every civilization. Such is Christianity. A mere cultural religion knows no fall, no original sin, but only development. But in Jesus Christ we have the act of God, at once of His Holiness and of His Grace. (11) Since that day Gogarten has been reckoned one of the leaders of the dialectical theology. He has published less than either Barth or Brunner, and his work consists mainly of articles and addresses on particular problems contributed, for the

(11) Wieser op. cit. 6 and 16.
 McConnachie op. cit. 391.
 Die Religiöse Entscheidung. 45.

most part, to *Zwischen den Zeiten*. He has been influenced by Ebner and Buber from whom he learnt to regard the problem of the "thou" as central. (12) While at Jena Gogarten was in close personal contact with Eberhard Grisebach, then Professor of Philosophy there, whose book "*Gegenwart, Eine kritische Ethik*. 1928" shows the influence his ideas had on Gogarten. In particular it is to Grisebach that Gogarten owes the idea that the decisive actuality which stands over against us is the other man, the 'thou', who is our neighbour. The problem of reality begins for us men where there is a concrete, temporal meeting between an "I" and a "thou", where, in Bible phrase, we have to do with our neighbour. (13) It is only through our relation to our neighbour that we realise and fulfil our relation to God. "The content of faith is thus the meeting with the concrete "thou as God's creation." There is no faith "which, since it is "faith in God, is not at the same time faith in the other man, the "thou - the Bible says: the neighbour - as God's creation, through "whom in reality God speaks with us and to whom we are therefore "indissolubly bound." (14) "As surely as the whole world is God's "work just as surely does man's reality, since he is God's creation, "consist in this, that he is always met by a thou, and not allowed "to escape from this responsibility." (15)

(12) Gogarten. *Glaube und Wirklichkeit*. Vorwort.

(13) Gogarten. *op. cit.* 77. 184.

(14) Gogarten. *Ich Glaube an den dreieinigen Gott*. 60.

(15) Gogarten. *op. cit.* 110.

Thus Gogarten was led ever deeper into the ethical and political questions which troubled Germany in the post-war period. He believed that Barth was in danger of carrying on a timeless and self-satisfied theological work which, despite its claim to belong to the Church, had lost touch with the life of the Church, which was a life in the full stream of human history. (16) Gogarten believed that theology had a word to speak to men in their present situation and something to learn from it. Not fine ideals but actual service in the present situation is, he believes, what is required of us. "It is of no use to project new programmes, be they ever so clever. "It is of value to do the simpler but sorer work of recognising facts, "not to strive after far goals, but to do that which lies to our hand. "Actual sober work is that which alone avails." (17)

Gogarten fell back upon a traditional Lutheran doctrine which has experienced a revival of popularity in recent years; the doctrine of the orders. (cf. Brunner The Divine Imperative). According to this doctrine the basic social institutions (the family, the economic order, the political order, etc.) are divinely ordained in their basic structure, and though they have been corrupted by sin they still bear the imprint of "the order of creation", and must be respected as embodying God's Will for their members. In particular the State is a necessity for the preservation of law and order. It is the Christian's duty to obey the requirements of the social order in which

(16) Gogarten. Gericht oder Skepsis. 7 - 8.

(17) Gogarten. Illusionen. 126.

he finds himself as though God's law were embodied in its very structure. He is, to be sure, "a free man, subject to no one", delivered from the curse of the Law by the Gospel of Christ; yet, as Luther said, he is at the same time "a bond slave, subject to every one" by virtue of the new law of love and service which he gladly obeys out of gratitude to Christ; and in all his social relations his service is one of obedience to the constituted authorities, whoever they may be. This emphasis on the State and its authority is characteristic of Gogarten's thought. (18) Since the Nazi revolution Gogarten has modified his views, distinguishing between the State and the Volk or Nation, and making the ethics of the State dependent on the will of the nation for their ultimate criterion. (19)

This, according to Barth, is not only to play into the hands of the totalitarian state but to turn from faith in God and His self-revelation in His Word and the intention with which Gogarten and he entered into collaboration in 1922, and to return to the errors of catholicism and modern protestantism which they set out to combat. (20) Nevertheless Gogarten remains a theological thinker of undoubted sincerity and unusual ability whose work is always disturbing and challenging. (21)

3. Rudolf Bultmann.

Rudolf Bultmann, Professor of New Testament at Marburg, is

(18) For a criticism of this see Brunner. The Divine Imperative. 615 ff.

(19) N. Ehrenström. Christian Faith and the Modern State. Chapters vii - ix.

(20) Barth. Abscheid. Z.d.Z. 1933. 537 f.

(21) Gottlob Wieser. Friederich Gogarten. 46 ff.

one of the foremost leaders in what has come to be known as the formgeschichtliche school. His book on "Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition" (1921 second edition 1931) belongs to the most radical type of New Testament criticism and gives little ground for expecting its author to be also a prophet of Reformation theology. In his interesting and important book "Jesus", published in 1925, Bultmann shows that all the characteristic notes of the dialectical theology can be found in the teaching of the historical Jesus. There he finds the strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God, the radical conception of sin, the account of the disturbed relations between God and man effected by sin, the stressing of God's demand for obedience and for instant decision, and the thought of forgiveness as His gift, all of which are stressed in the dialectical theology.

His view of revelation given in "Der Begriff der Offenbarung im Neuen Testament" (1929) is largely an exegetical, rather than a dogmatic, study but shows clearly the influence of Heidegger's phenomenological philosophy. (22) The central conception of his doctrine of revelation, his exegetical method and the influence of Heidegger can all be seen in a very short quotation from the above pamphlet. (23)

"If we ask about the conception of revelation in the New Testament we shall ask first, how man is seen here in his finitude

(22) Martin Heidegger. Sein und Zeit. 1927.
 see Heinemann. Neue Wege der Philosophie (1929). 372 ff.
 Bultmann. Die Geschichtlichkeit des Daseins und der Glaube.
 Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 1930.
 339 - 64.

(23) Bultmann. Der Begriff der Offenbarung im Neuen Testament. 20.

"(Begrenztheit). And the first answer is simple: Man is limited
"(begrenzt) by death, his last, his real enemy (I Cor. xv, 26).
 "And therefore the further answer is also simple: Revelation gives
"life."

"For what doth it profit a man to gain the whole world, and
 "forfeit his life? For what should a man give in exchange for his
 "life? (Mark viii, 36 f. R.V.) O wretched man that I am! Who shall
 "deliver me out of the body of this death?" (Romans vii, 24. R.V.)
 Revelation is not the communication to man of supernatural truths
 but the impartation of life. Through Jesus Christ man comes to
 know that his life is bounded (begrenzt) by God and that he is claim-
 ed by God. (II Cor. v, 18; John iii, 16) This is never our posses-
 sion but a word which must be spoken to us new every morning. (23a)
 Since man has a natural knowledge of his finitude and death as the
 boundary of his existence he has therefore a pre-understanding of
 revelation. (24)

Bultmann's attachment to the "existential" philosophy brought
 about his separation from Barth. (25)

4. Emil Brunner.

Closer to Barth than either of the above stands Emil Brunner,
 a compatriot, born in 1889. Brunner was from 1916 to 1924 minister
 at Obstalden and since then has been Professor of Theology in the

(23a) Bultmann. op. cit. 22 ff.

(24) Bultmann. op. cit. 5 ff.

also Wilhelm Link. "Auknüpung" "Vorverstandnis" und die
 Frage der "Theologischen Anthropologie" Theologische
 Rundschau. 1935. 224 ff.

(25) see Barth. Dogmatic I. 39 ff.

University of Zürich. A Fellowship at Union Theological Seminary, New York, in the year 1919-1920 gave him an opportunity gaining a sound knowledge of English which he uses with an enviable clarity of style. (26) Like Barth and Thurneysen, Brunner belonged to the group of young Swiss pastors who were deeply influenced by Hermann Kutter to whom he dedicated his first important work, *Erlebnis, Erkenntnis und Glaube*, the Habilitationsschrift which gained him recognition as Privatdozent at the University of Zürich in 1921. In the preface to that book he speaks of deep impression made on him by Barth's second edition of the "Römerbrief" and Gogarten's "Religiöse Entscheidung", from which he had learnt much that would have entailed changes in what he himself had written had time permitted. In particular he had come to see that the conception of the Word of God was central and decisive for all the questions with which he was concerned. (27) From that time on Brunner made rapid progress as an independent representative of the new theological outlook. In 1924 he published "Die Mystik und das Wort" of which a new, and considerably modified, edition appeared in 1928. The scope of this comprehensive book is more clearly indicated in the sub-title which runs: "The opposition between the modern interpretation of religion and the Christian faith displayed in Schleiermacher's theology." The religious problem is concerned

(26) For biographical details see

Wm. Koepp. op. cit. 35.

Brunner. The Theology of Crisis. ix.

(27) Brunner. *Erlebnis, Erkenntnis und Glaube*, 2nd Edition 1923. iv and v.

with the nature of God and the nature of man and the relation between God and man. Brunner sees that problem in terms of a contrast between Christian faith and every non-Christian religion and philosophy. All those non-Christian systems Brunner regards as different aspects of mysticism which he defines as "die einem Kultursystem ein - und "untergeordnete mystische Religiosität." (28) "There are," he says, "only two religions today with which we must seriously reckon: "Mysticism in its manifold shades, and the Christian Faith." (29) Christianity is the religion of God's particular revelation of Himself through His Word; Mysticism is the finest, sublimest form of the deification of the creature, that is, of heathenism; that which it acknowledges is experience; its gaze is wholly directed towards the inner events of the soul; and that which it accounts of the highest value is feeling. The book is a frontal attack on Schleiermacher and his influence on present-day theology. Brunner acknowledges that Schleiermacher was "the one truly great theologian of the century" and for Schleiermacher the man, with his powerful personality, richness of spirit and blameless purity of mind, he has a profound respect. But Schleiermacher was the father of the "Christian Mysticism" in modern theology, and in its controversial aspect Brunner's work is to be understood as one prolonged polemic against Schleiermacher the theologian. His indictment of Schleiermacher is pressed to the point of a clear-cut alternative "Either Christ or modern religion." (30)

(28) Brunner. Die Mystik und das Wort. 1928. v.

(29) Brunner. op. cit. 2.

(30) Brunner. op. cit. Einleitung, especially 10.

Brunner misses in Schleiermacher and in the modern theologians who derive from him the distinctive element in the Christian faith, namely, the apprehension of the special, particular revelation of God. That apprehension is completely lacking in mysticism and in philosophical idealism. In them revelation is never particular but only general; it means "the emergence into consciousness of the eternal foundation of all appearances which is always already present, the perception of something which was always already true, the realization of a divine presence which could always have been already perceived." (31)

Brunner does not claim any originality for his own view of revelation. On the contrary he maintains that he is only seeking to bring the Church back to the classic expression of the Christian faith which we have in the Reformers. Revelation, in the true Christian sense, has these characteristics: it is particular: it is bound up with a temporal, historical fact: it is once for all. (32)

What Brunner is concerned to emphasise, both in the "Religionsphilosophie Evangelischer Theologie" (1927) and in the first book of "Der Mittler" 1927, is that between the ideas of revelation in Christianity and modern liberal theology there can be no compromise: a choice must be made between them. The task of theology is to protect a true doctrine of revelation from the ever-present threat of deterioration.

(31) Brunner. Der Mittler. 4.

(32) Brunner. op. cit. 6 ff.
 Brunner. Religionsphilosophie. 8 ff.

Two main impulses are to be discerned in all Brunner's later work. On the one hand there is the new orientation to all theological and ethical problems given by the work of Ferdinand Ebner, the Austrian philosopher, who in 1921 published his book on "Das Wort und die "geistigen Realitäten," and Dr. Martin Buber whose "Ich und Du", published in 1923, proved to be one of the most stimulating and influential productions of the post-war years. Brunner acknowledges that his eyes were opened to the significance of this new movement by Friedrich Gogarten who, as we have seen, was deeply influenced by it, largely through the mediation of his philosophical colleague in Jena, Dr. Eberhard Grisebach. (33) The working out of this impulse may be seen in Brunner's massive book on Christian Ethics, *Das Gebot und die Ordnungen: Entwurf einer protestantisch-theologischen Ethik*, published in 1932. Still more clearly is this seen in *Der Mensch im Widerspruch* (1937) and most of all "*Wahrheit als Begegnung*" (1938) in which the theological implications of this new orientation are admirably sketched. The second impulse comes from Brunner's desire to bring the Gospel to the outsider and particularly to modern, educated youth. He feels that in our present situation there is a real danger lest concentration on pure dogmatic theology, such as Barth regards as the only task of the theologian, should result in the Church becoming a mere coterie of convinced Christians carrying

(33) Brunner. *The Divine Imperative*. 636, 590 and 701-2.
 " *Man in Revolt*. 512. 10.

on their theological conversations behind closed doors in language that is Greek to the outsider. (34) The Church today is everywhere faced by a world which does not understand this churchly or theological language and there is laid upon us all a missionary task, that of meeting men where they stand and speaking to them in language they will understand. Just as the missionary who goes to people of another race and religion seeks to find a point of contact for the gospel in the conscience, religion and customs of his hearers so today we must seek points of contact with our non-Christian hearers. Brunner believes that such points of contact exist and that they ought to be used. "It is an unkindness which cannot be justified "to make faith even harder for the modern man, . . . who through "whole development of the spiritual and cultural life and above all "by the lifelessness of the Church finds it hard enough to believe "anything at all, by breaking down the bridges to faith which God "has left for sinful man in false zeal for God's Glory "Especially in a time when all consciousness of God is diminishing, "it will not do . . . to treat that consciousness of Him which remains . . . as if it were not there, or of no significance . . . "By such a proceeding we can only spoil our opportunity of getting "a hearing; for the man who, without being a Christian, knows "something of God, will not let himself be persuaded that he knows

(34) Brunner. Z.d.Z. 1932. 532.
Z.d.Z. 1929. 274.

"nothing about Him." (35)

It is this zeal for a new Christian apologetic which led Brunner to turn to the problem of natural theology and brought about the dispute with Barth which is the subject of this thesis.

II. A. SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF NATURAL THEOLOGY.

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II. A. SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF NATURAL THEOLOGY.

1. Beginnings.

In an article on "The Theology of Karl Barth", published in May 1932, Professor N. W. Porteous wrote, "It is perhaps worthy of mention that, in a letter to the writer, Barth gave it as his opinion that it was in their attitude to this question of the limits of natural theology that the differences between the various representatives of the school of dialectical theology would become most apparent." (1). Two years before, while a student at Bonn, I had received the same impression from the conversations I had with Barth.

Having traced the development and outlined the principles of the dialectical theology, we must now proceed to consider the controversy over natural theology which is foreshadowed in the above quotation. Before doing so, however, it is desirable that a brief sketch be given here of the history of natural theology.

The term natural theology appears to have been introduced by the famous scholar Varro, a contemporary of Cicero, and is found in some fragments of his *Antiquitates* preserved to us by St. Augustine in his great work de Civitate Dei. (2) He used it to describe an account of God and divine things which makes the claim to be strictly true and in this differs from the other two genera theologiae,

(1) Expository Times. Vol. XLIII. 343.

(2) Augustine de Civ. Dei. VI. 5. See Clement C.J. Webb
Studies in the History of Natural Theology 1915. p. 10.

the mythical and the civil theologies, which have no such pretensions. Mythical theology dealt with the tales of the gods and their doings as related in current literature, especially that of Greece. Civil theology was the knowledge of the State religion, its fasts and feasts, and the ritual appropriate to them. "But philosophic, or natural theology is a different thing. It is the doctrine of God and of the divine seriously taught by scientific philosophers as an integral part of a recent theory of $\phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$, natura, the reality of things. It thus makes a definite claim, well founded or not, to be genuine $\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\tau\eta\mu\eta$, to give us truth in the same sense in which geometry or arithmetic does so. The ground to be covered by such a doctrine of God had already been marked out with some precision by Plato in the tenth book of the Laws; it is the same ground to which, in the main, natural theology has confined itself ever since Plato's first erection of it into a scientific discipline." (3).

Plato in this passage on natural theology is concerned to meet three views which he regards as mischievous to the moral life, both personal and corporate. "The first is the view that there are no gods; the second that there are gods, but that they take no care for man; the third that they care for men, but are easily persuaded by sacrifice." (4). Against this current of atheism, agnosticism and superstition Plato is prepared to maintain

(3) A.E. Taylor. The Faith of a Moralist. Series I. 2.

(4) Webb. Studies in the History of Natural Theology. 84-85.

the existence of God as author of all "becoming", of all we now call "nature", the control of this for ends worthy of His perfect wisdom and goodness and the exercise of a moral government of mankind according to laws of sovereign and inflexible justice. (5)

"From Plato's time to our own, the natural, rational, or philosophical, theologian has remained in principle true to this programme: God, Providence, Judgment to come have been and are his special themes." (6)

From Plato this tradition passed to his great pupil, Aristotle, and their differences then passed into the philosophy and theology of the Christian World. It is tempting to trace the two streams of influence, particularly as they are mediated to us through Augustine and Aquinas but this would take us too far and is not absolutely necessary for our present purpose. (7)

2. St. Thomas Aquinas.

The most important work of the Roman Catholic Church on Natural Theology is the Summa contra Gentiles of St. Thomas Aquinas. In this he explains that in the task of refuting the errors of unbelievers he cannot appeal to scriptural authority since it is unrecognised by them. Hence he is obliged to fall back on "natural reason", which in things divine is insufficient.

(5) Webb. op. cit. 84 ff.

(6) Taylor op. cit. 2-3.

(7) see A.L. Lilley. Religion and Revelation Chap. II.

The limits of the natural reason are clearly defined. We have no direct knowledge of any existence apart from the world of nature as perceived by the five senses. Such knowledge as we do have of realities which cannot be perceived with the senses is of the nature of inference from the things we can see and touch. Since God belongs to this class He cannot be known to us directly or per se, but only per suos effectus, through His effects in the world of nature. The existence of God can be inferred from the things which the senses perceive, but not His essential nature. All that we can infer about His essential nature is purely negative. In a word, we know that God is and what He is not. Yet the world of sensible things is the creation of God and must bear some impress of its Creator. This is true in particular of God's greatest work of which we have any natural knowledge, man. However great the distance which separates us from God our Creator there are in our natures qualities which provide a certain analogy to something that is in God. Thus our negative knowledge of God is supplemented by what can be inferred from analogy "Our natural knowledge takes its beginning from "sense. Hence our natural knowledge can reach as far as it can "be led by the things of sense. But, starting from sensible "things, our intellect cannot reach as far as to see the divine "essence; because sensible things which are created by God, are "not equal to the power of God which is their cause. Hence from

"the knowledge of sensible things the whole power of God cannot
 "be known; from which it follows that His essence cannot be
 "seen. But because they are His effects and dependent on Him
 "as their cause, we can be led from them so far as to know that
 "God exists, and to know concerning Him those things which must
 "necessarily appertain to Him in virtue of His being the first
 "Cause of all things, exceeding all that He has caused." (8)
 But man's nature is such that he requires more than this for
 full satisfaction. "The perfected blessedness of the human
 "soul consisted in the intellectual vision of God. And though
 "it could never gain that vision in statu viatoris, yet all
 "its earthly pilgrimage could and ought to be a preparation for
 "it. And revelation and grace were the supernatural aids to
 "that preparation." (9)

Through the revelation given in the Scriptures we come to
 know the doctrine of the Trinity and all the distinctively
 Christian doctrines concerning Jesus Christ and the way of
 salvation God has provided in Him. This comes to us through
 faith of which St. Thomas recognises two degrees. "In this
 "revelation a certain order is observed, such as is suited to
 "man, so that he may proceed by degrees from the imperfect to
 "the perfect. At first they are so revealed as not to be
 "understood, but only to be believed, as it were, on hearsay,

(8) Summa Theologica l. 12. XII.

(9) A.L. Lilley. op. cit. 25.

"because the intellect of man, when in that state in which it is bound to the things of sense, cannot raise itself at all to behold those things which exceed all the analogies of sense; but when it is freed from the bondage of sensible things, then it can rise to contemplate the things that are revealed." (10)

Faith, in St. Thomas' view, does not destroy reason though it supersedes it. Still less is it contrary to reason. Faith and reason have each their proper provinces and methods. Natural reason must keep to its own department. It cannot prove the doctrines of faith and any attempt to do so must prove injurious. What it can do is to defend the Articles of the faith, by showing that they are not repugnant to reason.

3. The Reformers.

Although the question of natural theology was not for the first Reformers, one of burning importance, the tendency with them is to minimise its importance. Their views will be dealt with incidentally when we come to consider the present controversy between Barth and Brunner and we here limit ourselves to two characteristic quotations, one from Luther and one from Calvin.

Luther acknowledges a natural knowledge of God, but a knowledge so faint and so corrupted by sin that it is quite

(10) J.M. Heald. Aquinas. E.R.E. Vol. I. 657 b.

inadequate to man's need.

"Reason knows that there is a God, but who or what He is
 "who is rightly called God - that it does not know. And so it
 "is with reason as it was with the Jews when Christ walked on
 "earth . . . They knew Christ was among them and walked among
 "the people; but what His person was they did not know . . .
 "And thus reason acts the blind cow with God and makes nothing
 "but blunders: it always misses the mark: what is not God it
 "calls God, and what is God it does not call God . . . It
 "flounders in and gives the name of God and divine honours to
 "what it thinks is God; thus it never lights upon the true God
 "but always the devil, or its own conceit which is ruled by the
 "devil." (11) Calvin, too, acknowledges that God has so im-
 printed Himself upon the creation that men ought to know Him and
 be constrained to give Him the honour which is His due. But
 in point of fact they do not and to this failure there is no
 exception. All that he has to say about the possibility of a
 natural knowledge of God leads up to the sixth chapter of the
 Institutes which is headed "The Need of Scripture, as a Guide
 "and Teacher, in coming to God as a Creator." It is only where
 the Scriptures are our Guide and Teacher that we can come to a
 knowledge of God in the Creation. "For as the aged, or those
 "whose sight is defective, when any book, however fair, is set

(11) Luther's Works, Weimar Edition. 19. 206.
 quoted G.S. Hendry. God the Creator. 101 f.

"before them, though they perceive that there is something written,
 "are scarcely able to make out two consecutive words, but, when
 "aided by glasses, begin to read distinctly, so Scripture, gather-
 "ing together the impressions of Deity, which, till then, lay
 "confused in their minds, dissipates the darkness, and shows us
 "the true God clearly." (12)

4. Protestant Orthodoxy.

Protestantism of succeeding generations hardened into an orthodoxy in which there was a marked return to positions more like the Catholic doctrine. It distinguished two kinds of revelation, a natural and a supernatural. The natural revelation was partly inward, in man's innate consciousness of God and the fact of conscience, and partly outward, in nature and history. The supernatural revelation was of two degrees. There was the direct revelation given to prophets and apostles, and the indirect revelation, that which reaches us through the prophets and apostles. The supernatural revelation is still the more important. "However, in the growing humanism and rationalism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries an opposite tendency soon began to declare itself - the tendency to place ever greater weight upon rational discovery and either to be sceptical as to

(12) Calvin's Institutes I. vi. 1. Beveridge's Translation.
 On Calvin's doctrine of natural theology see
 Peter Barth. Das Problem der natürlichen Theologie
 bei Calvin. T.E.h. 18.
 Peter Brunner. Allgemeine und besondere Offenbarung
 in Calvin's Institutio. Evangelische
 Theologie 1934. 189 ff.

"whether any revelation had been granted at all or to insist
 "that such revelation did not add anything essential to what was
 "rationally discoverable but was merely a gracious 'republication'
 "of rational truth to a world that was otherwise in danger of
 "missing it, or of losing it after it had once been possessed.

"On the whole, the eighteenth century embraced the latter
 "of these two alternatives. But the nineteenth century seemed
 "often to prefer the former. During that latter period it
 "grew to be more and more the habit, not only among academic
 "philosophers, but to a considerable extent also among theologians
 "and religious thinkers generally, to speak of our Christian
 "knowledge in terms of human discovery, and to make less and
 "less use of the terminology of revelation. Our religion was
 "thus in serious danger of coming to be regarded as something
 "spun by ourselves out of our own substance, and no longer as
 "God's gracious provision to enlighten our darkness and minister
 "to our sore need." (13)

5. Deism.

The deistic movement of the eighteenth century need not
 detain us here. In its most characteristic form, in English
 Deism, it was a relatively short-lived movement since its rise
 and fall were confined to the century bounded by the English

(13) John Baillie. Revelation. XV - XVI.

Revolution of 1688 and the French Revolution of 1789. The stand-point of this movement may be quite accurately gauged from the comprehensive titles of two typical works. In 1696 John Toland published his "Christianity not mysterious, showing that there is nothing in the Gospel contrary to Reason nor above it, and that no Christian Doctrine can properly be called a Mystery." This book "marks a critical point in the gradual change of men's views with regard to the comparative authority of reason and revelation. A certain arrogant assertion of superiority on behalf of reason was now substituted for that deference which had hitherto been considered the fitting attitude of the human mind in the presence of knowledge communicated from above." (14) The second typical product of the deistic movement I have in mind is Matthew Tindal's "Christianity as old as the Creation, or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature." In this book, published in 1730, Tindal maintains on a priori grounds, drawn from the justice, goodness, and infinite perfection of God, that natural religion has always existed as a perfect thing, and that therefore revelation can add nothing to it. All additions must be, not only unnecessary, but false. Unsatisfactory as it was the deistic movement was a needed protest against the Protestant scholasticism of the seventeenth century with its barren dogmatism divorced

(14) G.C. Joyce. Deism. E.R.E. 4. 535 a.

from any real relation to the religious and moral life.

This protest was carried a stage further by Kant who criticised not only the revelatio specialis of Orthodoxy but also the revelatio generalis of Rationalism and set in place of revelation ethical postulates. (15)

The terms "general revelation" and "special revelation" which are here used by Wiesner point to a new distinction which has largely taken the place of the old distinction of natural and revealed knowledge of God. "It will be seen at once that "the old and apparently so clear distinction between natural "and revealed knowledge is in this way traversed and superseded; "and that not because the revealed knowledge is naturalised but "because the natural knowledge is now drawn up into the sphere "of revelation. It is now asserted that God has revealed Him- "self, His mind and His will, not only in Christ and the Scrip- "tures, but to some extent also in the pre-Christian and non- "Christian religious traditions of the world, in the ordinary "processes of thought, in philosophy, in external nature, in "human history; though only in Christ and the Scriptures are "we put in possession of the special revelation of His saving "grace." (16)

(15) Wiesner. Das Offenbarungsproblem in der dialektischen Theologie 13 f.
Mackintosh. Types of Modern Theology 23 f.

(16) Baillie. op. cit. XVIII - XIX.

6. Schleiermacher.

Although hints of this new way of looking at the problem are to be found in earlier writers it is in Schleiermacher that it blossoms forth in the manner in which it was to dominate the religious thought of the nineteenth century. "You reject the dogmas and propositions of religion", he said to the cultured despisers of religion. "Very well, reject them. They are not in any case the essence of religion itself. Religion does not need them; it is only human reflection on the content of our religious feelings or affections which requires anything of the kind, or calls it into being. Do you say that you cannot away with miracles, revelation, inspiration? You are right; we are children no longer; the time for fairy-tales is past. Only cast off as I do faith in everything of that sort, and I will show you miracles and revelations and inspirations of quite another species. To me everything that has an immediate relation to the Infinite, the Universe is a miracle; and everything finite has such a relation, in so far as I find in it a token or indication of the Infinite. What is revelation? Every new and original communication of the Universe to man; and every elemental feeling to me is inspiration. The religion to which I will lead you demands no blind faith, no negation of physics and psychology; it is wholly natural, and yet again, as the immediate product of the Universe, it is all

"of grace." (17)

For Schleiermacher revelation has not the intellectualistic sense which it had in Protestant Orthodoxy. It is no longer a communication of doctrine, but of life. Faith in God is therefore not a mere theoretical conviction but practical certainty which expresses itself in the determination of the believer's life. The Scriptures are no longer regarded as a textbook of new knowledge but as a witness to practical faith and a source of inspiration. In this communication of life Jesus takes a central and unique place. "It is through the character and personality of Jesus that the change in the character of man, which is redemption, is inaugurated and sustained. Redemption is a man's being brought out of the condition in which all higher self-consciousness was dimmed and enfeebled, into one in which this higher consciousness is vivid and strong and the power of self-determination toward the good has been restored. Salvation is thus moral and spiritual, present as well as future. It is possible in the future only because actual in the present. It is the reconstruction of a man's nature and life by the action of the Spirit of God, conjointly with that of man's own free spirit." (18) In all this the supernatural and dualistic outlook of Protestant Orthodoxy

(17) Schleiermacher *Über die Religion*.
quoted Mackintosh op. cit. 43-44.

(18) E.C. Moore. *History of Christian Thought since Kant*:
82-3.

has given place to a spiritual monism in which discovery takes the place of revelation, the religious consciousness that of the Word of God, and the mere 'not yet' of imperfection the place of sin. He thus defines revelation. "The idea of "revelation signifies the originality of the fact which lies at "the foundation of a religious communion, in the sense that "this fact, as conditioning the individual content of the re- "ligious emotions which are found in the communion, cannot it- "self in turn be explained by the historical chain which precedes "it." (19) As such revelation belongs more to the sphere of the philosophy of religion than to that of theology proper. "The Christian revelation" says Werner Wiesner in his exposition of Schleiermacher's views, "stands beside others as a source of "an individually determined piety (Frömmigkeit). But it has "thereby lost its exclusiveness, its character as a decisive "event for all mankind. In this way Schleiermacher has re- "solved the contradiction between modern thought and the Christian "idea of revelation, but at the expense of the Christian idea." (20)

Schleiermacher marked an epoch. He gathered up in himself the creative impulses that were then stirring in the world, and to him may be traced back the characteristic theological tendencies of the two or three succeeding generations. Indeed,

(19) Schleiermacher. The Christian Faith § 10.
Eng.Trans. p. 50. §

(20) Wiesner. op. cit. 16.

the only comparable figure in the nineteenth century is that of Albrecht Ritschl of Göttingen who, through his great monograph on "The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation", exercised a profound influence on Protestant theology in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

7. Ritschl.

The progress of theological thought is not infrequently a zig-zag course between extremes. Behind the formation of Ritschl's own system lie his reactions to two dominant influences in nineteenth century theology. On the one hand there is the subjectivism, with the no less objectional phenomenon which so often follows in its train, Mysticism. This was Schleiermacher's contribution to the debate and it was regarded by Ritschl as a piece of romantic sentimentalism. On the other hand was the speculative rationalism of which Hegel was the chief exponent. "This type of thought . . . Ritschl strove not without success "to dislodge from the seat of power." (21) "Every claim", said Ritschl, "to teach something concerning God in Himself apart from "some real revelation on His part, felt and perceived on ours, "is baseless." (22) The proper object of theology is not the Christian mind but that presentation of God in Christ which is set forth in the New Testament. The proper task of the

(21) H.R. Mackintosh. op. cit. 143.

(22) Ritschl. Theologie und Metaphysik. 34.

theologian is not the development of a speculative system but the exposition of the revelation given in Christ as the norm to which Christian piety must conform.

In framing his own system he starts from Kant and his contradiction between the moral law with its claims upon man and the physical order which seems to ignore morality. Ritschl is not content with Kant's solution of the difficulty by accepting religion as a postulate of morality. He points, like Schleiermacher, to the independence of the religious experience, but instead of speaking of a feeling of dependence he says that religion, like morality, expresses itself in value-judgments. Ritschl's well-known, but often misunderstood, theory of value-judgments need not detain us long here. In outline it may be expressed thus:- There are two kinds of judgment, that in which the object is regarded in its relation to, and value for, the self, and that in which it is considered in respect of its cause and relations to other objects. The first yields the value-judgments characteristic of religion and morality, the second the theoretical judgments of science and metaphysics. "Independent value-judgments are all perceptions of moral ends or moral hindrances, in so far as they excite moral pleasure or pain, or, it may be, set in motion the will to appropriate what is good or repel the opposite . . . Religious knowledge forms another class of independent value-judgments . . . Religious

"knowledge moves in independent value-judgments, which relate to man's attitude to the world, and call forth feelings of pleasure or pain, in which man either enjoys the dominion over the world vouchsafed him by God, or feels grievously the lack of God's help to that end." (23) A theory of this nature is obviously open to the same criticism as that which finds the essence of religion in a feeling of dependence, viz. that it is purely subjective. "Rejecting the aid of philosophy in giving objectivity to the judgments of value, Ritschl seeks to escape the subjectivism which his theory of knowledge in religion seems to involve by his historical positivism." (24) This, as Brunner points out, involves a return to rationalism. "The Ritschlian theology is a rationalistic system in biblical dress." (25) This escaped the notice of all but a few sharp sighted opponents because historical positivism appeared to be free from the suspicion of rationalism. On the contrary it is a special form of rationalism. "The ground-plan of the Ritschlian theology - a sketch of which is indispensable for an understanding of his conception of revelation - is somewhat as follows. The whole is dominated by the idea of man's ethical goal. Man needs religion because it is only under the presupposition of a world order which is set upon a goal that he can assert himself

(23) Ritschl. Justification and Reconciliation. Eng.Tr. 205.

(24) A.E. Garvie. Ritschlianism. E.R.E. Vol. 10. 816 a.

(25) Brunner. Der Mittler. 35.

"ethically in the world. Therefore the perfect idea of God is "that which expresses most purely those thoughts of an ethical "goal. That is the - ostensibly Christian - conception of "God as 'Love' or perfect moral will (Zweckwille). This con- "ception of God is a postulate." (26) Corresponding to this conception of God is that of the Kingdom of God as a perfect religious and moral fellowship. Ritschl failed to perceive that while he had purged theology of the ontological speculations of idealism his own theological thinking was based on a moral metaphysic. Everything in his system follows of necessity from the idea of God as "Love" and that of the "Kingdom of God." Revelation becomes the historical introduction of an a priori idea which is valid in itself i.e. the Kingdom of God. Jesus is the revelation because He has introduced and exemplified this idea. "His whole activity, in discharge of His vocation, forms "the material of that complete revelation of God which is present "in Him, in whom, in short, the Word of God is a human person." (27) In the second place Jesus sets the historical movement going in which the idea of the Kingdom of God finds its expression. In this Christ's superiority to those who come after Him is merely relative and due to His historical priority. "Only in the sphere "of the ethico-religious life, viewed from the stand-point of the

(26) Brunner op. cit. 36.

(27) Ritschl op. cit. 451.

"Kingdom of God, does the God-man find His place, because that Kingdom, and nothing else, is the direct correlate of the Divine self-end. It follows therefore that as the historical Author of this communion of men with God, and with each other, Christ is necessarily unique in His own order. For if a second could be produced who, really, was on a level with Christ in grace and truth, in world-conquering patience, in scope alike of purpose and achievement, he would yet stand in historical dependence upon Christ, and therefore, logically, would be subordinate to Him." (28)

But in all this Jesus' place in revelation is only comparable to that of say Euclid in mathematics. Such an appeal to history is dangerous and unstable. Either it will pass into the historical relativism of the 'history of religious school' or return to rationalism.

8. Troeltsch.

About the end of the nineteenth century a new movement was developing in German theology. It arose mainly out of criticism of two features of Ritschl's thought, his conviction that the full and final revelation of God has been mediated through the facts of history, and his practical isolation of Christianity and failure to consider the problems raised by the

(28) Ritschl op. cit. 465.

scientific History of Religions. This was the "Religionsgeschichtliche Schule" a band of brilliant scholars who gave to liberal Protestantism its final and most characteristic form. The systematic theologian of the movement was Ernst Troeltsch, equally at home in history, philosophy and theology, who taught first in Heidelberg and, later, in Berlin.

The father of this new study was Max Müller, the great Anglo-German orientalist who exercised from Oxford a most stimulating influence. The presupposition of his work in this field was the conviction that the many religions of mankind are only so many panes of coloured glass through which the one and same light streams. Behind all the varied historical manifestations there stands the one, eternal and universal religion. To understand the nature of this religion calls for a close study of all its historical manifestations, a study which demands the surrender of all dogmatic prejudices, such as are associated with claims to absoluteness. Only when we regard Christian history as a particular vein in history as such can we be in a position to make a true judgment on human norms and ideas. "Historical research is now not merely one side of our way of interpreting things; it is not merely a partial satisfaction of the cognitive impulse; it is the basis of all thinking about values or norms, it is the means by

"which the race takes stock of its own essential being, its origins and hopes." (29) Troeltsch proceeds to interrogate history by means of three laws of enquiry - laws which govern all historical phenomena, religious as well as secular. They are the laws of criticism, of relativity and of analogy. "According to the law of criticism, no historical judgment can assert more than a probability, or rise higher than a moral certitude . . . The law of relativity, as its very name conveys, is of a kind to bar out all facts of a unique or 'absolute' character. Even facts alleged to be of a supernatural order must, it is declared, be reduced to a scale at which they become amenable to scientific treatment . . . All events are woven into the same web and are of the same general pattern, all are explicable by immanent forces, all are such that an exhaustive interpretation of their emergence can be undertaken with good hopes of success . . . The law of analogy, in turn, is explained to mean that from the nature of the case religious thought in history has everywhere been at work on similar lines, with the result that, as the discerning might have predicted, virtually all the important doctrines of Christianity have a counterpart or vis-à-vis in other faiths. If, Troeltsch urges, we take pains to realise this fact clearly, we shall find it easier to make an understanding approach to such transcendent Christian beliefs as

(29) Troeltsch. Die Absolutheit des Christentums (first edition) 3-4.

"those which affirm the Incarnation, the Resurrection, or the "miracles of Jesus. Ideas of that sort have no historical or "strictly doctrinal truth; on the other hand they have the "beautiful and timeless truth of religious poetry. They belong, "in short, to that profound and irreplaceable symbolism in which "the soul is wont to clothe its ultimate intuitions concerning "the nature of the Unseen." (30) It is not difficult to realise that the claims of Christianity receive but short shrift at the hands of these all-determining laws or principles. Christianity is but one religion amongst others and its rise, development, and claim to truth, must be studied in the same way as others. With this idea of a general evolution in religious history the claim of Christianity to be a revelation of God to man is not denied, but the significance of the word is changed. The idea of a special or unique revelation cannot be entertained but that of a universal or general revelation becomes all important. All religions claim to rest on revelation.

Nowhere has God left Himself without a witness. Troeltsch has given a clear and succinct account of his views on revelation in the article on that subject which he contributed to the first edition of *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*.

Revelation he defines as "the perception of God or the "self-demonstration of God in man." and goes on to say, "It is

(30) Mackintosh op. cit. 198-200.

"revelation such as everyone can experience and testify to who has a real religious life, were it only for moments of time." In its historical manifestations it means "a historical personality, doctrine, or Scripture, or even a religious institution through which in a definite religious circle every single personal religious impression is first awakened and mediated."

The difference between Christianity and other religions does not lie in its right to claim revelation for itself. All religions are based on revelation. There is, however, a difference of value and truth in these various revelations. "Christianity is not the only revelation or redemption, but the culminating point of the revelations and redemptions which are at work in the elevation of humanity to God." This Christian revelation is not confined to a point in time but comprises the whole history and development of Christendom. For example, such an event as the Reformation, constitutes a new step or degree of revelation within Christendom. (31)

In Troeltsch and those who shared his views we have the culmination of that movement of religious life and thought which, reaching back to the Renaissance, set man ever more clearly in the centre and sought to find in his reason, feelings, ideals, or history the way to God. It is against this background that the dialectical theology has risen and developed its characteristic views.

(31) Troeltsch. Offenbarung. R.G.G. (first edition) 918-922.

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B. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN BARTH AND BRUNNER.

In his polemical pamphlet "Nein!" Barth declares that Brunner suddenly began, about 1929, to talk about "the other task of theology" and the "point of contact". At least two years earlier, however, Brunner, writing in *The Mediator*, was saying "It is all-important for Christian faith to distinguish itself as faith in the fact of revelation, in the mediator, from the fundamentally immediate religion of idealism and mysticism. But it is another question to ask whether faith is not able to recognise traces of truth in all religion, and traces of God in all being and thought. As a matter of fact, Christian faith does recognise such traces." (1) At that time Brunner was unaware of any difference between himself and Barth on this question for in a footnote on the same page he adds: "It is remarkable how many critics of the so-called dialectical theology have made criticism easy for themselves by insinuating that we deny all general revelation in the history of nature and the spirit of man. They have not understood, it seems, that it is just in this that the dialectic of faith has its basis, that man carries in himself a - corrupted - likeness to God, that the original good creation is thus the God-revealing creation. The question is not whether there is a general revelation - apart from that we could not ask about God - but in what sense, whether it is direct or indirect, whether it is such that the Christian revelation is only a high point

(1) Brunner. *Der Mittler*. 12-13.

"in the general revelation, or whether it is something quite other-wise, viz. the true revelation." (2)

It was, however, in 1929, with the article on "The other Task of Theology" in *Zwischen den Zeiten* that Brunner turned specially to defining the limits of a true natural theology. "Now that the antithesis between nature and grace is in some degree understood, it is high time for us to apply ourselves with the greatest industry to the problem of general revelation in all its phenomena. To reject from the outset a natural theology in every sense of the word is neither Pauline nor Reformed, however great the danger of the modern thought of continuity may be at this point." (3) In this he reproaches Barth for not seeing that in both preaching and theology there must be an element of what Brunner calls "eristic" theology alongside the dogmatic. (4) From that time onwards the divergence of their interests became more and more apparent. On Barth's side we have the radical rejection of even Augustine's doctrine of the *imago Dei* in the address on "The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life" given at Elberfeld in October 1929 and criticised by Brunner in a lengthy note appended to his address on "Church and Revelation" when printed in *Gott und Mensch*, 1930. 56. In a series of articles, one on "Theology and the Church", another on "Theology and Ontology" and

(2) op. cit. 12. 2.

(3) *Z.d.Z.* 1929. 274.

(4) "Eristic" is a term invented by Brunner to replace the word "apologetic" which has fallen into discredit. "Eristic", from ἐρίζειν = to dispute, ἐριστική τέχνη = the art of disputation, is the adjectival equivalent of the German term "Auseinandersetzung" and expresses likewise the double-sided nature of the transaction.
Z.d.Z. 1929. 274 f. cf. the explanatory note in *Natur und Gnade*. 2nd Edition. 50.V.

a third on "The Question concerning the 'Point of Contact' as a "Problem for Theology" in *Zwischen den Zeiten* 1932, Brunner carried the debate a stage further by claiming that there is a point of connection for the divine message in man which is undestroyed by sin, a questioning after God which is natural to man. This point of contact Brunner defined as "that knowledge of himself which the "unbelieving man possesses, and which can, as such, be carried over "into faith." (5) This point of contact included three elements:

1. Our humanity, or our reason, that which distinguishes us from the beast, our capacity to speak and to understand rational discourse.
 2. The content of our rational consciousness, our sense of creatureliness and death to come.
 3. Our conscience whose content is fundamentally a sense of guilt. (6)
- Barth criticised these views in the new edition of the *Dogmatic* published in 1932 (7) and in a special preface to the English translation of the *Commentary on the Romans* warned his readers against looking at him "simply through the spectacles of Emil Brunner." (8)

In the same year, 1932, Brunner published his book on ethics whose very title, "The Law and the Ordinances", indicated Brunner's continued interest in the question of a general revelation. The ordinances are certain patterns discoverable in the web of life. These are seen in their true significance by the eye of faith alone,

(5) *Theologie und Kirche*. Z.d.Z. 1930. 397-420.
Theologie und Ontologie. Z.f.Th.u.K. 1931. 112 ff.

(6) Z.d.Z. 1932. 514 ff.

(7) *Dogmatic I*. 1. 28 ff. 273 f.

(8) *The Epistle to the Romans*. (Eng. Trans.). vii.

but are also dimly seen and revered as of divine origin by even the natural man. These ordinances, of which marriage and the state are typical, constitute the general revelation. This Barth characterised as a breach of the first commandment and classed Brunner among those who, like the Roman Catholics and liberal Protestants, had forsaken the true path. (9) This charge was repeated by Barth in his "Farewell" to *Zwischen den Zeiten*. (10) The breach was at last open and obvious. Brunner was urged to make his defence and this he did in a pamphlet entitled "Nature and Grace" in which he paid a warm and generous tribute to Barth. "In a few years he has completely altered the face of the Protestant theological position. The contest is not now, as it was fifteen years ago, about 'Religion' but 'about the 'Word of God'; no longer about 'God in us' but about the 'revelation in Jesus Christ.'" (11) Nevertheless, Barth, in his polemic against the false natural theology which has so injured the Protestant Church in the past and still threatens it with deadly peril, goes too far. In rejecting all natural theology Barth throws out the baby with the bath water. The task of our theological generation is to find its way back to a true natural theology. (12) As a first step Brunner has written this pamphlet which has a three-fold purpose. To show, 1) that Barth's real intention and his own are the same: 2) that Barth draws false conclusions from his central

(9) Das erste Gebot als theologisches Axiom. *Z.d.Z.* 1933. 310 ff.

(10) Abschied. *Z.d.Z.* 1933. 538.

(11) *Natur und Gnade*. 5.

(12) *op. cit.* 44.

intention: 3) that Barth wrongfully charges with treason those who are unwilling to make these deductions. (13)

Brunner claims to be in complete agreement with Barth in holding that the Church's message has not two sources or norms, revelation and reason, or the Word of God and history, nor has Christian action two norms the Law and the ordinances. The "and" in the title of his book "The Law and the Ordinances" does not indicate a co-ordination but points to a problem, that of the relations of law and ordinances. (14)

Brunner then sets forth six theses on the subject of natural revelation which he felt Barth would maintain, though he admits that Barth has nowhere so expressed his views. To these six theses he appends six antitheses of his own maintaining that these express the view of the Scriptures, and also of Calvin and Luther.

The substance of these six theses ascribed by Brunner to Barth is as follows:

1. Sin has absolutely effaced the divine image in man.
 2. There is no general revelation of God in history, nature or conscience.
 3. The grace of God is known in Christ alone and not in God's creative and providential activities.
 4. There are no providential ordinances, (Erhaltungsordnungen) no natural law, which can provide us with a divine norm for our actions.
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(13) op. cit. 4.

(14) op. cit. 6.

5. There is no "point of contact" in man's fallen nature, to which the redemptive Word of God can appeal.

6. The new creation is in no sense the perfection of man's fallen nature, but it comes into being through the annihilation of the old fallen nature. (15)

Brunner then proceeds to set forth in detail his own antitheses and with these we shall be concerned in the main sections of this thesis.

Barth replied with a vigorous and uncompromising "No!" He disclaimed all responsibility for the theses in which Brunner had set forth what he considered to be Barth's views. Natural theology, in Barth's opinion, is not worth the systematic consideration which it there receives. To give it such consideration even for the purpose of refuting it is to allow oneself to be drawn away from the true ground of Christian theology, the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and also to forsake the true method of theology, the exegesis of the Scriptures. Where there is a real concern for and understanding of true theology one can only pass by the question of natural theology as a source of temptation and error. (16)

Barth then proceeds to submit Brunner's natural theology to a detailed examination with the object of showing that this natural theology cannot be reconciled with Brunner's claim to be loyal to the Reformation principles of sola gratia, sola scriptura "Grace the only source of salvation: Scripture the only norm of faith."

(15) op. cit. 7 f.

(16) "Nein!" Theologische Existenz heute 14. S. 11 ff.

An interesting and important section in Brunner's pamphlet is that in which he appeals to the Reformers, particularly Calvin, in support of his thesis. Apart from an occasional reference, examination of the Reformers views has been reluctantly set aside in this present thesis, on the ground that to do so adequately would necessitate the writing of another thesis.

The publication of "Nein!" in the autumn of 1934 closed the dispute for the time being so far as Barth was concerned. Brunner issued a second edition of *Natur und Gnade* in which the original text was fortified by a seven page preface and sixteen pages of notes in which he sought to clarify and explain his position. (17)

In 1937 a further contribution to the controversy was made by Brunner with the publication of a massive work on the Christian Doctrine of man with the title "Der Mensch im Widerspruch: Die Christliche Lehre vom wahren und vom wirklichen Menschen." (18) "With the publication of this book" said Brunner, "I hope that I have redeemed the promise made in the foreword to the second edition of Natur und Gnade, namely, that only a complete theological anthropology, which begins with the great central truths of the Christian faith - the Trinity, Election, and Incarnation - and is directed towards the final Redemption, will be in a position, without causing new

(17) "Natur und Gnade". In the second edition the text of the first edition is reprinted with the same paging, viz. 3-44. The preface is paged in Roman figures: I - VII, and the notes follow the main text as pages 45-60.

(18) An English translation by Miss Olive Wyon appeared in 1939, with the title "Man in Revolt", and this has been used by me as far as possible.

"misunderstandings, to show clearly my concern, as against Karl Barth, "namely, Man's responsibility." (19)

This, Brunner's latest and authoritative statement of his views, particularly on the subjective side of revelation, the doctrine of the imago dei, is, of course, the main source book for our discussion of Brunner's doctrine.

Pages

III. A. THE REVELATION IN THE CREATION 117 - 128

III. A. THE REVELATION IN THE CREATION.

"It is the task of our theological generation to find its way "back to a right natural theology". Thus Brunner closed his polemical pamphlet "Natur und Gnade". In a note to the second edition, in the following year, he explained that he did not mean that this was the most important or only task of theology today but simply desired to emphasise its significance for a Church called, as the Church was to-day, to be a Missionary Church. (1) Two years later in an appendix to "Man in Revolt" he re-emphasised his conviction about the importance of natural theology. "The events in the German Church Struggle in particular have shown how fundamental for the existence of the Church "is the right kind of theologia naturalis, that is, the doctrine of "general revelation or revelation through creation which is based upon "the Bible, and of the being of the natural man as being in the denial "of this original revelation. The position of the natural man's "knowledge of God and of himself from the point of view of Jesus "Christ is a theme which must necessarily stand at the centre of "theological discussion at the present time, not because in itself "it is the centre, but because it is the point at which the contrast "between 'Modern' thought and that of the Bible comes out most clearly."(2)

It was the fact that Brunner holding such views about the task of theology should continue to claim him as an "ally" and a "good "friend" from whom he was separated by no more than a slight

(1) Natur und Gnade. 44 and 59-60.

(2) Man in Revolt. 528.

misunderstanding that brought the angry note into Barth's reply. Barth did not deny that traces of natural theology were to be found in his works - it was not so easy to escape from it - but never for a moment did he imagine that it was the task of our theological generation to get back to a right natural theology. On the contrary, "since somewhere about 1916 I began to recover from the effects of "my academic studies, and in particular from the influence of the "positive - liberal pre-war theology my opinion of the task of our "theological generation has always been, that we must learn afresh "to understand revelation as grace and grace as revelation and there- "fore resolutely to turn away from all 'right' or 'wrong' theologia "naturalis in ever new decision and conversion." (3)

This radical difference of opinion, where it is not due to misunderstanding, finds expression in their different attitude to two main questions, that of an objective revelation in Creation, which is additional to that given in Scripture, and a human capacity for receiving revelation which is other than the work of the Holy Spirit. "The difference of view between myself and Barth comes out, "in the main, at two particular points: (i) that I, in opposition to "Barth, but in agreement with the Scriptures and the Reformers, main- "tain that God is still revealing Himself in His work of Creation at "the present time, and (ii) that I do not regard the distinctively "human element in man as a trifle, but that I regard it as a theologic- "ally relevant fact, which can only be understood from the point of

"view of the truth that man has been created in the image of God." (4)

Our critical discussion will deal in turn with those two questions but before embarking on that we must ask what Barth and Brunner really mean when they talk of natural theology.

There is little difficulty, so far as Barth is concerned, in answering that question. "By 'natural theology' I understand every 'supposedly theological system, i.e. one which pretends to be an interpretation of the divine revelation, whose object differs in principle from that of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and whose method, therefore differs in principle from the exposition of the Scriptures.'"(5) Natural theology, he continues, doesn't exist within what he considers to be the province of true theology. One who is busy with true theology will not waste time over natural theology but pass it by as a source of temptation and error.

It is not so easy to give a clear answer to the question where Brunner is concerned. "Owing to a somewhat unfortunate use of terms 'in my pamphlet *Natur und Gnade*," he says, "I am myself partly to blame for the curious fact that today many people regard me as the 'champion of 'natural theology' in the usual sense of the word, although actually I hold the diametrically opposite view." (6) That is to say he rejects the type of natural theology which is characteristic of the Enlightenment and forms the background of Liberal Protestantism. In this the principle of continuity between the natural and the Christian knowledge of God always threatens to

(4) Man in Revolt. 527.

(5) Nein! 11-12.

(6) Man in Revolt. 527.

extinguish the latter in any real sense, as indeed it does in rationalism which was the logical culmination of the Enlightenment, and in humanism which bears the same relation to Liberalism. (7)

He is no less opposed to the Roman Catholic doctrine which has been aptly described as the two-story conception. The basis for this is the Catholic doctrine of the imago Dei. According to this view man has not lost the imago through sin but only the dona superaddita, his original perfection. There are certain things about God and His duty which he can know perfectly by the light of reason without any necessity for a divine revelation, and certain virtues which the natural man can in his own strength perfectly practise. What is given by the special revelation is further information inaccessible to reason and a further and supernatural grace. The coming of the special revelation does not alter that structure of knowledge and action which is already there. It affirms it and on this "basement" of general or natural revelation the "upper storey" of special revelation is built. The two are clearly divided by a horizontal line. On one side lies nature, on the other, grace, on one, reason, on the other, revelation. (8)

Brunner claims to stand with the Reformers in rejecting this view, holding that sin has dimmed man's natural light of reason so that the divine revelation in nature is no longer clearly or fully accessible to him. The general revelation in nature is only rightly

(7) Natur und Gnade. 33 f.
The Divine Imperative. 599.

(8) Natur und Gnade. 32 f. 55 f.
cf. Kraemer. The Christian Message. 114 f.

understood from within the Christian faith, nevertheless something can be known and Barth goes too far when he denies all natural theology. (9)

Brunner's own doctrine is, he maintains, but the development of this insight of the Reformers, viz. that the theologia naturalis is a dialectic conception, an insight which their own concentration of interest on the doctrine of justification prevented them working out in the sphere of natural theology. (10)

He calls it a Christian natural theology to distinguish it from rational views such as those of the Enlightenment and the Roman Catholic. (11) For Brunner the significant word here is "Christian" and he explains its significance by the distinction he makes between a theologia naturalis in the subjective and in the objective sense. When we speak of a "natural revelation", he says, the word "natural" may be understood in two ways. It may be used in an objective sense to indicate the capacity of God's works in creation to reveal something of Him who created them. (Offenbarungsmächtigkeit) (12) This is only rightly known and understood "on the basis of the Christian "revelation, the Scriptures and the illumination of the Holy Spirit." (13)

The relation of those two revelations, that in Creation and that in Christ, is, however, two-fold. The specific Christian revelation clarifies and completes the natural revelation. But it in no way renders the natural revelation superfluous. On the

(9) op. cit. 15. 33 f.

(10) " " 33.

(11) " " IV, V. 50.
Man in Revolt. 527.

(12) Natur und Gnade. 15. 47 f.

(13) " " " 50 . 46 h. 15.

contrary the natural revelation is indispensable and the Christian is bidden to make use of it in addition to the Scriptures. There is much for even the Christian to learn from it especially in the sphere of ethics. (14) In a word, the Christian, having had his eyes opened by Christ, is now in a position to read the revelation of Himself which God impressed upon the world with its creation. This objective natural revelation is what Brunner means when he speaks of a Christian natural theology.

This is to be sharply distinguished from natural theology in the subjective sense. By this Brunner means what sinful man, by the exercise of his own powers, makes of this divine revelation. Sin so clouds his sight that in place of God man sees only idols and regards the natural law, the ordinances of creation and of providence as within his own power to fulfil. While this natural or rational knowledge of God is not a right knowledge there are even in its worst perversions glimmers of the truth and sufficient to establish man's responsibility and guilt. (15)

"Thus according to the Scriptures we must distinguish between "the revelation in Creation, or in Nature, which has not in any way "been destroyed by sin, and the actual knowledge of God which is required by Him, but actually frustrated by sin; that is between the "general (nature) and the special (historical) revelation, and finally "between that which the believer and that which the unbeliever knows "of the revelation in Nature." (16)

(14) Natur und Gnade. 25-26, 51-52, 54.

(15) Natur und Gnade. 14, 15, 33.
Man in Revolt. 529 f.

(16) Brunner. Man in Revolt. 530.

This distinction of an objective and a subjective natural theology corresponds exactly, Brunner maintains, to the reservation made by Calvin with his "si integer stetisset Adam". (17) "All these conceptions are in need of further theological work. But this cannot materially alter this outline without contradicting the witness of Scripture. Even the most perfect theology cannot in essentials go beyond the double statement that God has in truth not left Himself without a witness among the heathen, but they nevertheless have not so known Him as to come to salvation." (18)

The real difference between Barth and Brunner at this point lies in the different views they hold about the extent to which man's life has been affected by sin.

According to Barth sin has totally corrupted man so that he has no capacity for knowing God. This is true not only of the heathen but also of the Christian whose knowledge of God in faith is the gift of God and dependent on Him.

Brunner, on the other hand, holds that while sin has perverted man's nature so that he is no longer of himself, able to know the true God, yet in his idolatry there is a dim, groping knowledge which stands in a dialectical relationship to true knowledge. Faith not only gives man knowledge of God as Saviour but also opens man's eyes to the ever-present divine revelation in Creation. Brunner admits that even the Christian, "in so far as sin still 'adheres' to him",

(17) Calvin. Institutes. I. 2. 1.

(18) Natur und Gnade. 15.

has not a full knowledge of the divine glory in Creation. But such knowledge as he does have is a not unimportant addition to the revelation given in Christ. (19) From this it is obvious that the really important question in this controversy is that concerning the *imago Dei* and this must receive our fullest attention. Before turning to that we may look for a moment at what Brunner has to say about the revelation in Creation.

In an article in *Zwischen den Zeiten* on "The Significance of "the Old Testament for our Faith" Brunner points out that the Old Testament speaks of the Creator not because God is known from nature, but because He has revealed Himself through the prophetic Word as the Lord of His people. "He is not our Lord because He is to be known "from nature as the Opifex of this world-opus, but because He reveals "Himself to us as our Lord, as the absolute Lord besides whom there is "for us none other - therefore He must be Lord of the whole world too. "The knowledge of the Creator belongs not to theologia naturalis, but "to theologia revelata." (20)

In this Brunner agrees with Barth against all who hold a rationalistic point of view and would maintain that the Creator can be known from the Creation by the light of the natural intelligence alone. But he believes that Barth, in his concern for the doctrine of Redemption, does less than justice to the doctrine of Creation and needs to be corrected at this point. "We do not know the Creator "through the world, but through revelation; this thesis is right and

(19) op. cit. 14. 47. k.

(20) Z.d.Z. 1930. 37.

"it is good Protestant theology. But through Christ we also know
 "the Creator in the world - this statement which forms the content
 "of the early chapters of Calvin's Institutes, Barth ignores en-
 "tirely. The fact that the Creation is obscured by sin ought not
 "to make us forget that in spite of this it is God's Creation, and
 "that in spite of sin it bears traces of the glory of the Creator." (21)

From this it would seem that what Brunner is concerned to main-
 tain is simply that where through faith in Christ men's eyes have been
 opened to a saving knowledge of God there too they come to know that
 the same God and Father is at work in the world of nature. Equipped
 with the "spectacles" of the Scriptures, as Calvin expressed it, they
 can follow the traces of the Creator in the Creation. It is the idea
 expressed in George Wade Robinson's familiar hymn.

Heaven above is softer blue,
 Earth around is sweeter green;
 Something lives in every hue,
 Christless eyes have never seen:
 Birds with gladder songs o'erflow,
 Flowers with deeper beauties shine,
 Since I know as now I know,
 I am His and He is mine.

Even then the knowledge of God given through source is only partial
 being confined to "his eternal power and Godhead" but not rising to
 His mercy and love.

This is the sense in which Brunner means us to understand him
 when he says in Natur und Gnade that, "In every creation the spirit
 "of its creator is to some extent recognizable." (22)

(21) The Divine Imperative. 615.

(22) Natur und Gnade. 11 and 45.

But he goes beyond this in a way which threatens to contradict his claim to be loyal to the doctrines of the sola gratia and the sola scriptura.

He holds that revelation in Creation has significance for us apart from and prior to that in Jesus Christ which first opens our eyes to it. "We may not set aside the twofold nature of the revelation of God in Creation and in Jesus Christ by saying that the Creation is first known in Christ, as Barth has often done since his pamphlet on the Holy Spirit. On the contrary through Jesus Christ we know that God has often before revealed Himself to us, but that we did not give this revelation its proper due But Barth will not hear of it that God bears testimony to Himself as this Creator to some extent outside the revelation in Jesus Christ - and in so teaching he is neither biblical nor reformed. He acknowledges here only a general grace, but not a corresponding general revelation." (23) Likewise in an explanatory note on the paragraph in which he says, "The creation of the world is at the same time revelation, God's self-communication" he tells us "The actual situation is this, that men who do not look into Creation under the guidance of the Scriptures (scriptura duce) perceive there not God, but idols. But they could not do even that without that general revelation, since they take the work for its creator. On that account their idolatry is reckoned as guilt." (24) Barth in his criticism of Brunner draws attention to the ambiguity of the concept of

(23) Natur und Gnade. 14.

(24) Natur und Gnade. 46.

"Erkennbarkeit" which infects this section, and indeed Brunner's whole doctrine. Brunner contends that knowledge of the natural or general revelation is not a rational but a Christian one. Yet while sin has disordered man's knowledge of God in His works it has not entirely destroyed it. Men know sufficient to be inexcusable "because they are unwilling to recognise the God who manifests Himself to them so clearly." (25)

In this I think Brunner is contending for a valuable truth though here it is inadequately expressed. Although only the Christian has knowledge of the true God, a knowledge given and maintained by God in faith, yet outside the Christian revelation there is not utter darkness but an awareness of God which, however perverted it may be, has some relation to the true knowledge. Only one aspect of this need be mentioned. St. Augustine gave expression to a profound truth when he said, "Thou madest us for Thyself, and **"our** heart is restless, until it repose in Thee." (26) The ubiquity of religion is witness to this restlessness of the human heart and man's groping after something - he knows not what. In this there is not a knowledge of God but an awareness of a need and a claim which is related to knowledge of God. Edmund Schlink in a careful study of the New Testament passages which refer to a natural knowledge of God (Rom. I, 18 ff. etc.), and of the Reformation doctrine expresses it thus:- "In idolatry there is thus a hidden knowledge **"of God."** Idolatry would not be possible, had God not given Himself

(25) Natur und Gnade. 12. Nein! 17 f.

(26) Confessions I. 1. 1. Everyman Edition.

to be known. But God and idols exclude each other. Just as a lie is not possible without a knowledge of the truth and yet the lie entirely contradicts the truth, so in the natural knowledge of God the truth is entirely stifled by the lie and changed into the opposite. (27)

This is a view which has the support of practically all the experienced missionaries who have considered Barth's somewhat intransigent attitude towards this question. (28)

To insist as Brunner does that this should not be set aside and treated as mere ignorance seems to me both wise and right and that Barth's criticism of Brunner here misses the point. But while Barth is wrong in what he rejects I am sure he is right in what he maintains, viz. that there is no saving knowledge of God except in Jesus Christ and that Brunner in his concern for natural theology is looking in the wrong direction and weakens rather than strengthens his approach to those whom he would bring into true faith. Edmund Schlunk, in the book just quoted, notes that the Lutheran Confessions set down side by side that the human reason or natural understanding has a tiny spark of knowledge that there is a God, and at the same time characterises the reason as "ignorant, blind and perverted". Nor were they greatly concerned how to resolve this contradiction. "This lack of concern" he adds, "is a sign of theological clarity. Only in times of ecclesiastical decadence can the problem of the natural knowledge of God become the centre of theological discussion." (29)

(27) Schlunk. M. V. K. 149.

(28) See Inter.Rev.Miss. July 1938, and Expository Times Vol.50.
390 ff and 487 ff.

(29) Schlunk. op. cit. 151.

III. B. THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMAGO DEI.

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III. B. THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMAGO DEI.

1. BRUNNER'S DOCTRINE.

1. The Importance of the Doctrine of the Imago Dei for Brunner's Theology.

The importance of the doctrine of the Imago Dei for an understanding of Brunner's natural theology can hardly be exaggerated. He himself claims that for twelve years it has been the "central point of my theological thought." (1) During those years it has received an increasing amount of attention from him and the results have appeared not only in a series of essays and addresses but lately in the substantial book just quoted. A right interpretation of the Imago Dei is essential for the whole Christian conception of man. (2) It is also of decisive importance for theology. "The doctrine of the Imago Dei determines the fate of every theology." (3) The same is true of apologetics. "The centre round which everything turns is ... the doctrine of the Imago Dei." (4) "This doctrine also decides questions of immense practical actuality: our relation to natural law, international law, to the state and to culture." (5) It is also decisive for the understanding of the relations of Reason

(1) M.i.W. 531.

(2) M.i.W. 82.

(3) Die andere Aufgabe der Theologie. Z.d.Z. 1929. 264.
quoted in future as "Andere Aufgabe".
cf. N.u.G. 41, 57-8.

(4) N.u.G. 43.
Die Frage nach dem "Anknüpfungspunkt" als Problem der Theologie.
Z.d.Z. 1932. 519.
quoted in future as "Anknüpfungspunkt".

(5) Andere Aufgabe. Z.d.Z. 1929. 264.

and Revelation, Church and Culture, Faith and Humanity. (6) The first theological task, therefore, is to clarify the conception of the Imago Dei. (7)

2. The Historical Background to Brunner's Doctrine.

The conception of the Imago Dei is the common property of all Christian theology, and Brunner develops his own doctrine with reference to the historical heritage. This historical background and his own relation to it he summarises in an appendix on "The Image of God in the Teaching of the Bible and the Church." (8)

a. The Biblical Doctrine.

The few passages where the Imago is mentioned in the Old Testament refer to "a nobility, bestowed on man, which in some way resembles God and which distinguishes him from other creatures." (9) While they differ concerning the nature of this distinction all present-day expositors of the Old Testament agree that this refers to man as he now is, and not to a nature lost through the Fall. This Old Testament conception is also found in a few passages of the New Testament (10) but the majority of the New Testament references give the Imago an entirely new meaning. They bring it into relation to the doctrine of Christ as the prototype of sonship to

(6) M.i.W. 83. N.u.G. 43.

(7) "Anknüpfungspunkt". Z.d.Z. 1932. 519.

(8) M.i.W. 519-531.

(9) *ibid.* 519.

(10) I Corinthians xi, 7: James iii, 9.

God. (11) Thus "through the relation of the Imago to the prototype, "Jesus Christ, to the Word of God, and so to faith, the conception "of the imago is extricated from its Old Testament structural and "morphological rigidity and the dynamic understanding of the imago "as a being-in-the-Word-of-God through faith is established. On "this my whole work is based." (12) This New Testament doctrine differs from that of the Old Testament in presupposing that man's likeness to God is one which is lost and requires to be renewed. This renewal is the work of Jesus Christ in reconciliation and redemption. It is this difference between the Old Testament and New Testament conceptions which shows that no mere biblicism will suffice and sets the task for theology.

Brunner relates his own interpretation of the imago to three others. (13)

b. The traditional Catholic Interpretation.

It is to Ireneaus, the first really great theologian of the Ancient Church, that we owe the interpretation of the imago which dominated the Church for nearly 1300 years and is still the orthodox Catholic doctrine. This interpretation he based on the double expression used in Genesis i, 26. "Let us make man in our image, "after our likeness." (14) Under the influence of Greek philosophy

(11) Romans viii, 29: II Corinthians iii, 18: Ephesians iv, 24: Colossians iii, 10.

(12) M.i.W. 521.

(13) *ibid.* 86. 530-1.

(14) Hebrew: צֶלְמֶם and דְּמוּת . Greek: $\epsilonἰκών$ and $\delta\mu\iota\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$. Latin: *imago* and *similitudo*.

he identified the imago with man's freedom and rational nature, in which man is analogous to God. This quality of human nature cannot be lost or damaged. The similitudo Ireneaus interpreted as man's original relationship to God, a supernatural gift which has been lost since Adam's Fall. On this division into natural and supernatural the two-story edifice of Catholic theology and ethics has been erected. This Brunner regards as the "fatal basic error of the Church's anthropology." (15) "We fight this naturalism and rationalism which dominated the entire history of theology. There is no rationally understood essence of humanity, no human nature that may be understood apart from relation to God and to which this relation to God is added as a 'supernature'. The distinction between natural and supernatural is bad theology just as the distinction between the imago and the similitudo is bad exegesis. The entire 'nature' of man is supernatural - the being of the sinner no less than that of the redeemed. Man will be most profoundly misunderstood if by a method of subtraction, so to speak, what fallen man has in common with the original humanity is set over against what is lost, as 'nature' and 'supernature'". (16).

c. The Protestant Interpretation.

Luther's exegetical and spiritual insight led him to

(15) M.I.W. 530.

(16) *ibid.* 102-3.

break with the traditional doctrine. He saw that the distinction between the imago and the similitudo was untenable and that man must be understood from his relation to the original word and image of God. His relationship to God is not something additional to his human nature but its very essence, hence the destruction of this relationship affected his entire being. Through sin man has lost not a supernature but his God-given nature and is now an un-natural being. The imago Dei is entirely destroyed. What, then, is to be said of that which distinguishes man from the rest of creation, his reason, his humanity? In order to maintain the connection of this with the original creation the Reformers introduced the highly dubious conception of the 'imago - Remnant'. The image of God in man is destroyed in essence but a certain 'Remnant' has been left - enough to account theologically for that which distinguishes man from the animal creation. It included, according to the Reformers, not only self-consciousness, formal free-will, reason and the power of speech but also a certain knowledge of the Law and of God. (16a). "But this "obscure conception of the 'Remnant' prevented the right elucidation of the problem. It conceded to humanism at once too little "and too much. It was the point at which in the time of the "Enlightenment the whole Reformation front was broken through and

(16a) Brunner. Die Frage nach dem "Anknüpfungspunkt" als Problem der Theologie" Z.d.Z. 1932. 520.

"repulsed. It is also the point at which our work must begin
 "afresh." (17) "My whole aim is to renew this basic conception (of
 "the reformation doctrine) ... namely that man as a whole must be
 "understood from God, that therefore the human nature of the sinner
 "is a corrupted one, but that just on that account the humanity which
 "still exists must be understood from the original image of God or
 "relation to God. Thus I teach, as Luther did, that this present
 "humanity is a mere 'Remnant' of the original, but for that very
 "reason that in it which cannot be lost - that which distinguishes
 "mankind - is no profanum or bagatelle but can only be understood
 "from the original imago, that is, from a theological and Christo-
 "logical standpoint." (18)

d. The Interpretation of Karl Barth.

A third, more radical way of dealing with the conception of
 the imago is to regard it as of no consequence whatever. The re-
 sult is that the connection between man's human qualities and his
 relation to God is severed and the 'humanum' is turned into a
 'profanum'. This according to Brunner (19) is the way taken by
 Karl Barth and by him alone. It is in opposition to this that
 Brunner develops his own interpretation. The errors of all three
 previous attempts at a solution must be avoided. "The humanity

(17) M.i.W. 86.

(18) ibid. 531.

(19) M.i.W. 85 f. 530 f.

"Anknüpfungspunkt." Z.d.Z. 1932. 520.

"which we now possess is not, as Catholicism teaches, the true,
 "original human nature (which only lacks the donum superadditum)
 "nor is it, as Barth teaches, a theologically irrelevant, profane
 "fact: but it is, in its purely formal character that which remains
 "to man of his original relation to God. But this remainder is not
 "to be comprehended - as it was in the teaching of the Reformers -
 "by the merely quantitative term 'Remnant' but must be dialectically
 "understood." (19a)

3. A. Development of Brunner's Doctrine.

Brunner claims that his views on this question have not undergone any substantial change during the past twelve or fifteen years.(20) There have been however certain changes in emphasis and mode of expression which require to be noted before we give an exposition of the latest and most complete statement of his teaching in 'Man in 'Contradiction'

a. In 1929 in a note appended to an address on "Church and "Revelation" Brunner said, "The criticism of Augustine's doctrine "of the imago Dei which has recently been made by Karl Barth goes, "in my opinion, too far Barth is thoroughly justified in his "concern not to let the imago Dei become a possession of man, but "rather to let it be recognised as an act of God's grace. But he "overlooks the possibility that also the personalitas and humanitas

(19a) *ibid.* 531.

(20) *M.i.W.* 531. cf. viii - ix.

"of man, that which makes us men in distinction from the rest of
 "creation, rests upon God's actual Word addressed to us, so that
 "man, even in his sin, never stands beyond the reach of this Word
 "spoken to him by God, and therefore is never out of relationship
 "with God. Only because man has some kind of knowledge about God
 "can he be a sinner. That man is a sinner, that he can sin, is
 "itself proof that the imago dei is not effaced. But if this is
 "the case, then one must distinguish the two revelations, that of
 "the creation and that of the reconciliation." (21) Here and in
 the article on "Theology's Other Task" in *Zwischen den Zeiten* 1929,
 the emphasis is on the relation of the imago to the knowledge of God
 which man as he now is still possesses. "Only because we are in
 "God and know about Him can we ask after Him Man is not truncus
 "et lapis, but just man and that means; a being who to some extent
 "(irgendwie) knows about God - however deformed and dubious that
 "knowledge may be." The true doctrine of the imago dei is that
 "man as such knows about God what the sinner can know about Him." (22)

b. Three years later in an article on "The Question about the
 "Point of Contact", while the relation of the imago to man's natural
 knowledge of God is maintained the ethical aspect comes more into
 the foreground. Man's capacity for sin is an indication of his
 being made in the image of God. "In der Sünde lebt die

(21) God and Man. Eng. Tr. 116. 1.

(22) Andere Aufgabe. Z.d.Z. 1929. 264.

"Gottesbildlichkeit." (23) Man's relation to God is always one of responsibility. "He stands either in a right relation to Him or a wrong one, turned to God or from God, but always in responsibility which is substance of his humanity." (24)

c. In his pamphlet on 'Nature and Grace' published in 1934 Brunner maintained that so far as the imago dei was concerned the controversy between Karl Barth and himself seemed to be mainly a dispute about words. He agreed with Barth that the original image of God in man is destroyed and with it the possibility of doing or even willing what counts good in the sight of God. Barth, on the other hand, did not deny that unredeemed, sinful man was capable of thinking and acting reasonably. In order to show the compatibility of these two statements Brunner introduced into the discussion the distinction between the "formal" and the "material" imago. The terms 'formal' and 'material' were borrowed from von Oettingen but used by Brunner with a somewhat different connotation. (25)

The 'material' imago is what the reformers called the justitia originalis. It is man's original state as created by God, a life of fellowship with God and with his fellow-men in love. (26) This has been completely lost so that not even the slightest remnant of it remains, and there is no part of man's being that is not defiled by sin.

(23) "Anknüpfungspunkt". Z.d.Z. 1932. 522.

(24) *ibid.* 522.

(25) M.i.W. 521. 528-9.

(26) Natur und Gnade. 11.

The 'formal' imago consists of that which distinguishes even sinful man from the rest of creation, his humanity. (27) This is distinguished from the 'material' imago not quantitatively, as the reformers did with their conception of the 'Remnant', but categorically. The image on its material side is absolutely and entirely lost, but formally it is not in the least touched. "Man even as a sinner has not ceased to be the centre and peak of creation. This position of superiority in the entire creation which he still has rests on man's special relation to God, namely, that God has created him for the special dignity of bearing his image. This destiny is not annulled by sin, rather it is the very presupposition of man's ability to sin and it is in sin it lives." (28) This 'formal' imago Brunner defines more exactly by reference to man's rational nature and his sense of responsibility.

1. Man's rational nature. "Man even as a sinner, has this immense superiority over all other creatures, and this he has in common with God, that he is a subject, a rational being. Only God is a subject in the primal (urbildliches) sense, man in a reflected (abbildliches) sense. He does not cease even as a sinner to be a subject. Nor does he cease as a sinner to be one with whom one can speak, with whom God too can speak." (29)

2. Man is responsible. In very close relation to the above characteristic stands the other which, according to Brunner, belongs

(27) *ibid.* 10.

(28) *ibid.* 10.

(29) *ibid.* 10.

to the 'formal' imago - man's responsibility. Since man is one with whom God can speak he is therefore responsible "Even as a "sinner man is responsible." (30) Not only is man responsible but he is also conscious of it. "Not only have all men responsibility "but they have also a consciousness of it." This consciousness has a necessary connection with the responsibility as a more exact analysis will show. "It is only because man knows something about God's will "that he is able to sin. The being who knew nothing about God's Law "would not be able to sin - as we see in the case of animals. The "sinner's responsibility and knowledge of God's Will as law giving "and in virtue of that Law is one and the same thing." (31)

d. These terms 'formal' and 'material' proved to be a fruitful source of misunderstanding and in his latest book 'Man in Contradiction' Brunner drops them and gives his reasons for doing so in a somewhat sarcastic note.

"I have now given up the expression 'formal' imago. Firstly, "not to give any further occasion for the misunderstanding that "Schlink and others have already fallen into, that I advocate the "Catholic doctrine of a double imago (imago-similitudo) whereas I "reject that very doctrine as the fatal basic error of Church anthropology." Secondly, while what he teaches in 'Man in Contradiction' is exactly the same as in 'Nature and Grace'. "I have tried to say "it here in other words because obviously our theological generation

(30) *ibid.* 10.

(31) *ibid.* 12.

"very much lacks the training in logic which is necessary for an understanding of such a conception. How otherwise could a theologian make the complaint that my conception of the 'formal' imago 'turns out afterwards to be something very rich in content?' Formal and material are relative conceptions. For example, what used to be called formal freedom was certainly something rich in content, but it was something formal in respect of the point in question, the ability to do right before God My conception of the formal imago is formed on the analogy of this conception of formal freedom." (32)

In "Man in Revolt" Brunner develops his Christian doctrine of man and of the Imago Dei, by means of a complex and detailed analysis of the conception of responsibility, which we have already noted as one of the distinguishing characteristics of the 'formal imago'.

We may sum up this short survey of Brunner's development by saying that, while he is justified in claiming that his intention has been the same throughout (33) there has been a change of emphasis. In the earlier works the sense of responsibility is the outcome of the knowledge of God that even the natural man possesses, in this latest it is due to the "Gesetzlichkeitsstruktur" of man's nature.

B. The Problem of Man's Responsibility.

Brunner's aim in 'Man in Contradiction' is to clarify the point at issue in the dispute between Karl Barth and himself, which

(32) M.I.W. 530.

(33) *ibid.* 531.

is "simply man's responsibility. That alone and not any weakening
 "of the sola gratia is what holds me to the biblical doctrine of a
 "general or 'nature' revelation of God despite all contradiction.
 "That even the unbeliever is not without relation to God and therefore
 "responsible and that this responsibility is not annulled by the most
 "radical assertion of the bestowing love of God, but, on the contrary,
 "is taken up by it, this is the basic thought of my book which is
 "really only a series of variations on this one theme." (34)

Man belongs to so many orders of being that the question "What
 "is man?" is not so simple as it looks. He is distinguished from
 other creatures by anatomical and biological peculiarities, and by
 mental and spiritual endowments but these differences are not absolute.
 "The one thing which distinguishes man unconditionally from the sub-
 "human world is this, that he, and he alone, is a person. But even
 "this distinction is not unconditional unless we define the idea of
 "the person more plainly by describing him as the responsible being." (35)

This is the very essence of man's nature. "Responsibility
 "is not an attribute, it is the 'substance' of man's being. It con-
 "tains everything: freedom and constraint, the independence of the
 "individual and union and fellowship, the relation to God, to one's
 "fellow-man and to the world, that which distinguishes man from all
 "other creatures and that which unites him with all creatures." (36)

This fact of responsibility is known to, and recognised by,
 all. "No human being is without some sense of responsibility." (37)

(34) *ibid.* ix.

(35) Brunner. *The Christian Understanding of Man.* 158.
 quoted in future as C.U.M.
 cf. C.U.M. 151, 172. and M.I.W. 39, 87, 89, etc.

(36) M.I.W. 38-9.

(37) C.U.M. 157, 166.

"The consciousness of a divine obligation is indestructible, it even
 "survives all the dissolving evolutions of human thought. Even the
 "atheist and the cynic know it although they deny it in their theories.
 "It is not advisable to reproach them with want of responsibility.
 "The boundaries of the knowledge of responsibility are the same as
 "those of humanity, he who no longer knew responsibility would have
 "ceased to be a man." (38) Every man knows that he is responsible
 but not everyone knows "the content, the basis and meaning of re-
 "sponsibility." (39) "Neither the rationalist, nor the empiricist,
 "nor the believer denies responsibility. On the contrary they must
 "all acknowledge it. The question then can only be who solves the
 "riddle of responsibility, i.e. who explains responsibility in a way
 "which corresponds to reality; negatively, whose doctrine of re-
 "sponsibility doesn't do violence to the facts." (40) All philo-
 sophies have failed to give a convincing account of it. "Naturalism
 "has no idea of responsibility, since it knows no authority which can
 "make man responsible. Idealism may indeed seek to produce such an
 "authority in some spiritual law or value; but it is unable to ex-
 "plain why it is that man is in conflict with his own sense of re-
 "sponsibility. All it does is to substitute two principles for
 "the contradiction: a 'higher' and a 'lower' principle in man; this
 "simply destroys the unity of personality as well as responsibility
 "for the 'contradiction'. The mystical romantic doctrine evades

(38) M.i.W. 39. cf. 62, 89, 152. and Natur und Gnade. 12.

(39) *ibid.* 154.

(40) *ibid.* 209.

"both the problem of personal existence and that of responsibility. "The simple human being, it is true, has some sense of responsibility, and is also dimly aware of the presence of the contradiction; "but he has no idea either of its source or its significance." (41) Nor is this surprising since man is so related to God that no satisfying interpretation of his nature is possible from the human side. "It is not possible to describe the specifically human element in "man, that which is peculiar to man as such, in contradistinction to "everything else, without gaining a glimpse of the 'dimension of God.' "The distinctively human element in man is not a state of existence "which can be described independently of the relation to God; it "contains something peculiar which defies isolated description, that "is, the element of transcendence." (42)

The Christian doctrine of man which is none other than the doctrine of responsibility (43) is not a theory but an utterance of faith. We can know it because God has revealed Himself, has spoken His Word in Jesus Christ. It is in Him that we know the truth about our human nature. (44)

This brings us to the biblical doctrine of the "Image of God."

4. Brunner's Doctrine of the Imago Dei.

a. Introduction.

It is not easy to set out Brunner's doctrine of the Imago Dei

(41) C.U.M. 151-152.

(42) C.U.M. 154-5. cf. 142. and M.I.W. 45 ff.

(43) M.I.W. 209 and 38-41.

(44) *ibid.* 55 ff., 68 ff., 72.

in simple terms for two reasons. The whole book is a series of variations on this one theme and in the course of his expositions he uses a variety of expressions which are not always easy to correlate. There are also ambiguities, if not contradictions, in his use of some of these terms, particularly that of responsibility, to which attention will be drawn later.

Despite his renunciation of the terms 'formal imago' and 'material imago' this distinction still underlies all that he says and the simplest way of dealing with Brunner's doctrine is to follow that division. This he expresses in the sub-title "The Christian doctrine of the true and the actual man."

b. The Doctrine of the true man or the material imago.

1. In describing the creation the Bible clearly distinguishes man's creation as being different in kind from that of God's other works. "It is no idle play but relevant exposition that special attention has long been drawn to the new beginning made in the biblical account of creation with the creation of man. After the entire cosmos has come into being, in different items as it were, but always under the same divine imperative 'And God said, Let there be and it was so,' it is as if the Lord of Creation before the last great act pauses for a moment and then begins a new method of creation: 'And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' To the new kind of being of man, the creature now to be created, corresponds the new kind of creative

"act, an entirely new relation between creature and creator
 "Man, in distinction to the rest of creation, is created not merely
 "by God or through God, but in and to God. As it is said of
 "no other creature, 'Let us make', so also it is said of no other
 "that it is created 'like Him', 'after His image and likeness.'
 "What is meant by this? On the interpretation of this expression -
 "but an interpretation which understands it from the New Testament,
 "from Jesus Christ - depends the entire Christian doctrine of man." (45)

When Brunner turns to the New Testament for the interpretation of this Old Testament expression he fixes on the well-known passage in II Corinthians iii, 18, as "the best and most illuminating comment
 "on this statement," "But we all, with open face beholding as in a
 "glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from
 "glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." On this his
 comment is "Man bears within his own nature an image of God because
 "and in so far as God 'looks at' him his 'image' is a kind of re-
 "flection." (46)

The basic truth expressed in this parabolic concept of the Imago Dei is that it is impossible to understand man from himself. His true nature can only be known and understood from his relation to God.

2. Brunner now makes the transition from this conception of the image of God which man reflects to another which, he holds, is better

(45) M.i.W. 82.

(46) C.U.M. 156. cf. M.i.W. 86-7.

adapted to express the Bible view of man. "Far more relevant for
 "the thought of the Bible than this expression, which is drawn from
 "the aesthetic sphere, is that of the 'Word'. Man's distinctive
 "quality consists in the fact that God turns to him and addresses
 "him." (47)

"God creates man through His Word, but - so say all the New
 "Testament passages which deal with this imago - He so creates him,
 "that in this very creation man's active reception, hearing, under-
 "standing and faith are called out The nature of this double-
 "sided relationship is named from God's side 'call', from man's
 "'response'. Man's being, understood according to its essence, is
 "therefore: responsible being." (48)

Although he speaks of "all the New Testament passages which
 "deal with this imago" Brunner does not quote any of them in support
 of his view, but after a short exposition of man's creation as a
 'responsible being' he concludes this section on "The basic defini-
 "tions of the doctrine of the Imago" by affirming "It is not a
 "question of picture and image but of word and answer; that is the
 "exposition which the New Testament gives of the Old Testament his-
 "tory of creation, the conception of the Imago Dei." (49)

3. What does it mean, then, that man is made in the image of
 God or is a 'responsible being'? It signifies that man, in dis-
 tinction to all other creatures, is not a finished product but is

(47) C.U.M. 156.

(48) M.I.W. 87.

(49) ibid. 89.

still, as it were, in the hands of God. He is not an independent creature, having the springs of his nature in himself, or being complete in himself. It is only in relation to God, in the act of decision in answer to God's Word, that man truly exists. His being "is indeed a 'Selbst-sein' but not an 'aus sich selbst Sein'; he is "the divinely appointed creaturely correlate to the divine being, "the opposite of God which He has Himself created, a being who can "respond to God and in that response either fulfils God's creation - "or destroys it." (50) Man's responsibility, therefore, is not of such a nature that it is a thing demanded of him and which he is expected to fulfil of himself. That is the mistake of idealism and modern humanism. It is "not first a task but a gift, not first "a demand but life, not law but grace. The word which calls men "demanding an answer is not 'thou shalt' but 'thou mayest be'. The "original word is no imperative, but the indicative of the divine "love: 'Thou art mine'." (51) Thus God turns to man, offering Himself to man and calling him into fellowship with Himself. But this act of divine self-communication is such that man must make a response to it. Man "must 'repeat' the divine original word - not "make a word of his own, but give it back by his own act: Yes, I "am thine. Man is intended to respond to God in believing mutual "love Man has the content of his being in the Word of God and "therefore his essence is: responsibility from love, in love, and "to love." (52)

(50) *ibid.* 88.

(51) *ibid.* 88. cf. 94.

(52) *ibid.* 89.

4. The abstract and formal term 'responsibility' has to be given content and meaning and this is to be found in the rich, Christian conception - love. "The significance of responsibility is love." (53) "The God who is love creates man out of love, in love, for love. "Thus the divine love is both the basis and the aim of responsibility; and it is both the basis and the content of the specific and "genuine nature of man. Both the origin and meaning of man's existence lie in the love of God. Man has been created in order that "he may return the love which the Creator lavishes upon him, as "responsive love; that he may respond to the Creator's word of love "with the grateful 'Yes' of acceptance; thus man receives his human "existence from God when he perceives that his being and his destiny "are existence in the love of God." (54)

The life which corresponds to man's origin and the divine intention for man is this 'being in the love of God' "Sein-in-Gottes- "Liebe." (55) "Man's original essence is thus being-in-the-love- "of God, fulfilled-responsible being (das erfüllt-verantwortliche "Sein) the responsibility which comes **not** from a demand but as a "gift, not from the Law, but from grace, from the love that gives, "and which exists itself in returning love." (56)

"True responsibility is identical with that love." (57)

5. This response of man to the divine love in which and for which he is created has two aspects. It is a love to God which is awakened

(53) *ibid.* 63.

(54) C.U.M. 158-9.

(55) M.I.W. 94.

(56) *ibid.* 95. cf. 67-8.

(57) *ibid.* 150.

in him as a grateful response to God's love for him. "We love Him, **"because** He first loved us." But this finds its actual expression in love for one's fellow-men. "The responsibility-in-love first **"becomes** actual in relation to the fellow-creature." (58) The existence of these fellow-creatures is no accident or superfluity but the gracious gift of God which alone makes human life possible. "Man cannot be man by himself, but only in fellowship. For only **"in** fellowship can love express itself and only in this expression **"of** love is man human." (59)

This fact provides a new conception of humanity which finds the truly human not in the creative or understanding reason but in fellowship as the fulfilment of responsibility. **"'Love is the fulfil-**
"filling of the Law' (60) - not only of the moral law, but of the **"law of life."** (61) It is this which makes human life the image of the divine. The triune God is in His own being love, He reveals Himself as love, and in love we recognise not only God's true being but also the essence of man made in God's image.

6. Thus man as God created him and intended him to be, man in the fullest and truest sense of the word, is man living in response to the creative love of God a life of love towards God expressed in love towards his fellow-men. "Man in the divine origin, man created **"after** the image of God is the truly responsible man, that is, the **"man** who answers God's call of love with thankful love, the man who

(58) *ibid.* 96.

(59) *ibid.* 97.

(60) Romans xiii, 10; Matthew xxii, 40.

(61) *M.i.W.* 97.

"lives in fellowship with the Creator and thereby with the creature.
 "True responsibility is identical with this love which is founded
 "on the love of God. In this love alone can man fulfil the in-
 "tention of his creation; in this love alone does he live and act
 "responsibly towards his Creator; since he knows himself to be so
 "bound to his neighbour and lives his life with this obligation as
 "its law, he is a truly human man." (62)

In all this we are dealing with what Brunner in 'Natur und
 'Gnade' called the material imago. He now uses a variety of names
 and expressions with which to distinguish it. It is "fulfilled
 "responsibility" (63) or "true responsibility". (64) The man who
 so lives is the "truly human man" (65) and his life is a 'being in
 'the love of God'. (66) This is what the Reformers meant when they
 spoke of the *justitia originalis*. (67)

7. But such a man doesn't exist and none such ever has existed.
 It isn't necessary here to go into Brunner's interpretation of the
 story of Adam and the Fall which he regards not as history but as a
 myth enshrining a great truth. Adam is not a particular man who
 lived in the mists of antiquity but everyone of us. (68)

We are sinners who are living not in responsive love to God
 who is our Creator but in opposition to Him.

(62) *ibid.* 150.

(63) *ibid.* 94, 95. 150, 166.

(64) *ibid.* 40, 150.

(65) *ibid.* 40, 150.

(66) *ibid.* 94, 95, 150, 158, 166.

(67) *ibid.* 86, 95, 103.

(68) *ibid.* 75-78, 95, 102.

8. Only once in all history has One appeared who lived in that perfect fellowship with God and man for which God created us; He who said "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (69) It is when we meet with Him that we know both what God intended us to be and how far we come short of that divine intention. "We perceive ourselves to be in opposition to our origin because the origin is again set before our eyes. There, where the depths of the divine love are revealed, there, where at the same time true human love does its incomprehensible uttermost, in the Cross of Christ, do we become aware of the depths of our opposition to our origin. There first do we recognise how irresponsibly we live." (70)

c. The Problem of Man as he now exists.

1. The 'Grandeur and Misery of Man'.

"What a chimera then is man! What a novelty! What a monster, what a chaos, what a contradiction, what a prodigy! Judge of all things, imbecile worm of the earth; depositary of truth, sink of uncertainty and error; the pride and refuse of the universe! Know then, proud man, what a paradox you are to yourself For in fact if man had never been corrupt, he would enjoy in his innocence both truth and happiness with assurance; and if man had always been corrupt, he would have no idea of truth

(69) Mark x, 45.

(70) *ibid.* 150.

(70) *ibid.* 150.

"or bliss. But, wretched as we are we perceive an image of truth, and possess only a lie. Incapable of absolute ignorance and of certain knowledge, we have thus been manifestly in a degree of perfection from which we have unhappily fallen." (71)

With these words Brunner sums up his study of man's strange nature. In answering the question 'What is man?' two main facts have to be accounted for. On the one hand he stands out as distinct from all the rest of creation, endowed with qualities and capacities which bear witness to his superiority. On the other hand he lives in a state of discord and disharmony which speaks of an inner contradiction in his nature.

(a) The Indications of man's superiority.

In Chapter 7 § 2 "The Traces of the Image of God" and "the Grandeur of Man", Brunner sets forth the evidences of man's superiority to the rest of creation which all point to his special relation to the Creator.

1. The fact that without being actually mad man can mistake himself for God is itself an indication that his origin in God has not been wholly effaced or forgotten.
2. Man alone is a spiritual being and a subject, standing over against the world in which he lives as a being who does not wholly belong to it.
3. Man's search for truth, not for its usefulness, but for itself is an indication of a lost homeland which, though all unconsciously,

(71) Pascal. *Pensées*. Fragment 434. Edition.
Trans. by W.F. Trotter. Everyman Library. 121.

he must seek.

4. That he can, and of necessity does, form ideas about God is a further sign of his relationship to God.

5. Not only his knowledge but also his works carry marks of this lost greatness. Man, unlike the animals, is not content to build so that his bare needs are satisfied but in his work seeks to express his creative powers and his mastery over the world.

6. In reason and speech which are two of man's most characteristic endowments we have also two of the greatest indications of man's lost origin.

7. Speech is an expression of our necessary relation to others. Attempts have been made to derive the forms of community life from instinct but that has not proved satisfactory. There is an ideal factor in all man's community life which must be taken into account and this is due to a "memory" of an original unity.

8. Even more direct a witness to man's true nature is his moral consciousness. Every human society has its code of morals and every human being has some moral sense and a knowledge of responsibility. This, especially in its negative aspect, as bad conscience, bears witness to man's lost origin.

9. Above all man's religious consciousness points in the same direction. No race has yet been found which has no religion and even agnosticism itself bears unwilling testimony to man's religious instincts. (72)

(72) M.i.W. 169-178. cf. "Anknüpfungspunkt". Z.d.Z. 1932. 505-532. and Natur und Gnade. 37-44.

(b) The marks of the contradiction in himself.

In the following section of Mensch im Widerspruch (Chapter 7 § 3) Brunner deals with the manifestations of man's misery or the contradiction in his own nature to which these bear witness. These are the familiar enough examples of man's failure both in thought and practice, in morals and religion and need not be dealt with at length here more especially since some of them must be considered more fully at a later stage. "The contradiction in human nature is so apparent that it is hardly possible not to see it. The manifestations of this contradiction are therefore phenomena which everyone knows and everyone, who has thought about the matter, somehow connects with the contradiction in man." (73)

2. The Problem of accounting for this Superiority and Contradiction.

(a) The problem of man's nature has always been engaging man's attention and to its study the greatest minds have made their contribution. From Plato and Aristotle down to the scientific anthropological researches of our own day this activity has been unceasingly pursued. Yet summing up a brief survey of this activity, Brunner says: "Today then we seem to be further off than ever from an unequivocal answer to the question 'What is man?'" (74)

Nevertheless certain insights of value have been won. After many attempts to explain human nature on the basis of a purely

(73) M.i.W. 186. cf. 6 ff.

(74) *ibid.* 14.

(74) *ibid.* 14.

naturalistic view of life we see that the essence of human nature is not to be caught in that net. "Since man is always, whether he knows it or not, whether he wills it or not, reaching out beyond himself - one must more correctly say: is being 'grasped' from beyond - since man unlike all 'other animals' is the 'animal' which has ideas, and seeks after truth, beauty, goodness, holiness and righteousness - or flies from them - who has spirit and a conscience, and knows about the infinite, the perfect and the absolute - or dreams he does - so all 'empirical' research has its definite boundary in him." (75) A true knowledge of man can only be gained from some standpoint above the natural world to which he partly belongs yet transcends. Thus "the understanding of man always leads us either into the region of metaphysics or that of faith." (76)

It is not material to our present purpose to consider Brunner's discussion of the various attempts to account for man's nature by the different schools of philosophy. His conclusion is that Christianity, and it alone, takes seriously the real riddle of man's nature, the contradiction in his being. "Christian doctrine takes the contradiction seriously: it is man who in his self-determination contradicts the divine determination in creation. It is this double aspect of it which gives man's actual nature its peculiar character. Because man is created in God's image but has himself, the creature, destroyed it therefore is his existence in distinction to all others, existence in contradiction." (77)

(75) *ibid.* 47.

(76) *ibid.* 48.

(77) *ibid.* 164.

(b) The problem then is how can man as he now is be understood from the image in which he was created so that his present superiority to the rest of creation and the contradiction in his own life may be accounted for.

"How can man, how can the humanum, that is, what distinguishes man, - be he 'irreligious' or a believer - from the non-human creatures, be understood from the divine origin so that in that understanding the significance of the opposition of the present, sinful man to his origin in creation is brought out?" (78)

In the section on "The Historical Background to Brunner's Doctrine" we have already dealt with previous interpretations of the doctrine of the imago dei which attempt to answer that question. It is from a criticism of what he considers to be their weaknesses that Brunner develops his own contribution. "It is a question of carrying through consistently the biblical and reformed thought of the unity of man's nature. That means avoiding all the three previous attempts at a solution - the two-fold division of the imago and the similitudo, the conception of the remnant of the imago, or the reducing of it to something trifling and profane. Or, to put it positively, to understand the humanitas which belongs to sinful man and the lost justitia originalis from the one and the same source." (79)

(78) *ibid.* 83.

(79) *ibid.* 86.

3. Brunner's Solution.

This is so important that even at the risk of repetition I think it is desirable to gather together some of the more important passages in which Brunner indicates how "the humanitas which belongs to sinful man and the lost justitia originalis are to be understood from one and the same source."

It was in 1934 in the first edition of *Natur und Gnade* that Brunner introduced into the discussion the terms 'formal imago' and 'material imago', though the ideas which he thus sought to clarify had been expressed by him in other ways long before this. (80)

The differences between himself and Barth on this question of the imago dei seemed to Brunner to be largely a dispute about words. "I teach, as Barth does, that the original image of God in man is destroyed, that the justitia originalis is lost, and with it the possibility of doing, or even willing, what is good in God's sight". . . . Barth on his side does not deny that even sinful, unredeemed man is capable of acting and thinking in a reasonable way, and that humanity and culture, notwithstanding their questionable nature, are not simply of negative worth from the standpoint of revelation." (81)

To provide a basis for the accommodation of these two points of view Brunner proceeded to distinguish two different aspects of the imago. "It is essential to speak of man's likeness to God in a two-fold sense, in a formal and a material. The formal meaning of the

(80) *Natur und Gnade*. 6-11.
quoted in future as N.u.G.

(81) *ibid.* 9-10.

"concept is: the humanum, i.e. that which distinguishes man from
 "all the rest of creation, whether he be a sinner or not
 "We define it by two concepts, man's subjectivity and his respons-
 "ibility. Man has an enormous advantage over all other creatures,
 "even as a sinner, and this he has in common with God. He is a
 "subject, a rational being Even as a sinner he does not cease
 "to be one with whom man, and even God, can speak. On this is based
 "man's essential nature (Urwesen), to be responsible. Even as
 "sinner man is responsible If the formal side of the imago Dei
 "is understood in this way, it involves no injury to the material
 "definition, the justitia originalis, and just as little a lessening
 "of the gravity of the statement that the justitia originalis is ab-
 "solutely lost. Thus we do not use the dubious concept of a
 "'Remnant' which would suggest a quantitative and therefore also a
 "relative interpretation of sin. We make a categorical division:
 "formally the imago is not in the least injured - man, whether he
 "be sinner or not, is a subject and responsible. Materially the
 "imago is totally lost, man is a sinner through and through and there
 "is nothing in him that is not defiled by sin." (82)

In 'Man in Revolt' which Brunner published three years later
 (1937) he defends this division of the imago which had been much
 criticised, and seeks at considerable length to clarify his doctrine.
 "Man's relation to God is determined by the creation, it is given to

"man. It is so created, in a way that cannot be abrogated, that
 "man is based on God's Word, that he is created in and for love.
 "If then man decides against the Word of God he does not thereby
 "give himself another constitution - that is a power he does not
 "possess - but he sets up an inner contradiction in his own con-
 "stitution." (83)

"Through sin the original state of life, the *justitia originalis*,
 "is completely lost - man, in fact, does not live in conformity with
 "the love of God, so that he loves in return, Him who first loved
 "him. But the 'theological' structure of man's being, as it was
 "made by the Creator, is not destroyed by man's opposition to the
 "Creator's will, although its expression is perverted. Even as a
 "sinner man is only to be understood from the original image of God -
 "that is to say as living in opposition to it. We do not forget
 "that when we speak of an 'image of God' and its 'destruction' we
 "are speaking in parables. What we can say in plain terms is this:
 "the relation to God which determines the entire nature of man is
 "not destroyed by sin but is certainly perverted. Man does not
 "cease to be the being who is responsible to God but his respons-
 "ibility from being that of *Sein-in-der-Liebe* has become a *Sein-*
 "*unter-dem-Gesetz*, a life under the wrath of God." (84)

"Therefore there is nothing human which does not hint at the
 "original *imago Dei* and even so there is nothing human which does not

(83) M.1.W. 146.

(84) *ibid.* 96. cf. 129.

"indicate the perversion of man's nature. There is still, on this
 "side of the Fall, a humanum which distinguishes man from all other
 "creatures known to us. But this specific humanity is not the
 "uninjured human nature, as the Catholic Church teaches, nor is it
 "merely a 'Remnant' of the original human nature, as the Reformers
 "represent it to be. Rather it is human nature in its entirety as
 "it is created in the image of God, but in complete perversion. The
 "human as form, as structure - that is as responsible being - re-
 "mains, the human as content, that is as being in love, is lost.
 "Man does not cease to be 'before' God, but he is now perverted
 "before God and therefore God is perverted before him." (85)

"The result of sin is that man's nature, not merely something
 "in his nature, is changed, perverted." (86)

"This is the relative right of the Flaccian heresy; the imago
 "Dei is, in point of fact, no mere accident and the loss of the imago
 "is not the loss of an accident, but the imago Dei is essential
 "nature (Wesen) and its perversion is perversion of the essential
 "nature. The concept of perversion corresponds rather better to
 "the contradictory character of sin, that is, its relation to the
 "Word, than the concept of corruptio which has more of a contrary
 "and therefore natural character." (87)

Since the essence of the material imago was, as we saw, the
 responsibility which springs out of the relationship of God to man

(85) *ibid.* 166.

(86) *ibid.* 130.

(87) *ibid.* 130. 2.

through the divine word, this is prominent in the passages dealing with the relation of the material to the formal imago. "Man is "and remains the one who has his nature and existence in God's Word "and on that account and that alone, is responsible. He does not "cease to be in God's Word, called by God and summoned to respons- "ibility. But by his opposition his relation to the God who calls "him is perverted, and therefore the call itself from being a call "of bestowing love becomes a demanding and an accusing Law." (88)

Sin is man's denial of his responsibility to God and his claim to self-determination in opposition to God.

"But the superiority of the divine determination in creation "over our negative self-determination, that is, the inequality of "the divine-positive and human-negative factors in our actuality is "shown in this, that while through sin we certainly cease to live "responsibly we do not in the least cease to be responsible nor do "we even cease to know about our responsibility. Responsibility "remains after, as well as before, the characteristic formula of "man's essential nature - of man in revolt as well as of man in his "origin. But responsibility is now no longer the formula of his "actuality, but only the formula of his obligation, and thereby is "its meaning most profoundly altered." (89)

Brunner's solution to the problem set by man's present condition, which even in its misery is shot through and through with gleams of glory and manifestations of an inner contradiction from

(88) *ibid.* 165.

(89) *ibid.* 151.

which man cannot escape, is that man even as a sinner still stands in a relation to God which makes its impress upon him. This relationship to God, even where he denies it, is characterised by a sense of responsibility which bears witness to the fact that man's present life is still based on the Word of God and that he is still subject to the claims which God makes upon him. Man as a sinner is still a creature made in the image of God, though all that gave this 'imago' positive meaning and content has been lost and only the form remains. We must now turn to a consideration of this conception of the formal imago.

d. The Doctrine of the actual man or the formal imago.

1. Introduction.

Our actual human life is not what God intended it to be, a life of obedient and loving response to God's word of love, expressed in loving fellowship with our fellow-men. Sin has destroyed this divine intention. Nevertheless, even as a sinner, man is distinguished in many ways from the rest of creation; he is endowed with reason and the power of speech, is capable of distinguishing right and wrong. There is in his nature, even as sinner, that which enables him to create civilisations, to construct philosophies and to seek after God. This specifically human element is what the Reformers called the *humanitas* in distinction to the *justitia originalis* which was lost in the Fall. Brunner calls it the formal imago.

The formal imago is "das Humanum, i.e. that which distinguishes man, whether sinner or not, from all other creatures." (90) "By formal I mean the Humanum." (91)

When we come to ask what is the precise nature of this formal imago it is by no means easy to give a simple answer.

2. Definitions.

There are passages which so define the formal imago as to suggest that it is pure form, a kind of structural element in human nature which is given to it in the creation and forms the basis of man's being. It is "the structure of man's being which cannot be lost" (92) "the legalistic structure of man's present being". (93) Again: "the expression 'formal imago' is to be precisely described as, the relation to the original being of man or to the Imago which lies in the formal or personal structure of man's being as such." (94)

On the other hand Brunner ascribes to the formal imago a quite definite content. It is man's reasonable nature, the fact that he is a being who is capable of hearing and using speech. He is a responsible being and that involves a certain knowledge of sin, of the law, and therefore of God. (95)

In an earlier essay he defines man as a being who has some knowledge of God and then goes on to speak of the evidences of his

(90) N.u.G. 10.

(91) *ibid.* 49.

(92) M.i.W. 530.

(93) *ibid.* 531.

(94) *ibid.* 546.

(95) N.u.G. 10, 18-19. cf. "Jedes Formale ist, selbstverständlich, auch ein Inhaltliches." 49.

humanity, culture, art, philosophy, morality and religion as "the consequence of his relation to God, the imago dei which comes from God." (96)

In 1932 he says, "To this humanitas, then, the Reformers reckon not only self-consciousness, formal free will, reason and capacity for speech (Wortmächtigkeit) but also: a knowledge of the law and of God which is not more precisely determined. All this is brought expressly and repeatedly into relation to the 'Remainder' of the imago Dei which persists in even sinful man." (97)

In neither of these two passages is it quite clear whether Brunner considers the formal imago as the structural element in man's nature, which is the basis of these attributes of free will, reason, etc., or whether it is constituted by these attributes themselves. This was a frequent cause of criticism when Brunner's doctrine of the formal and material imago came to be examined. (98) To this Brunner made a short reply in "Der Mensch im Widerspruch". It was surprising to him, he said, that any theologian should complain that the formal imago had a content. "Formal and material are relative concepts. What the ancients, for example, called formal freedom is something with a very considerable content; but it is something formal with reference to the point under discussion,

(96) "Andere Aufgabe". Z.d.Z. 1929. 264.

(97) "Anknüpfungspunkt". Z.d.Z. 1932. 520.

(98) C. Stange. Natürliche Theologie. Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie. 1934/35. 367 ff.

F. Traub. Zur Frage der natürlichen Theologie. ibid. 1936. 34ff. and especially K. Barth. Nein! T.E.h. 14. 19 ff.

"the ability to do that which is right before God. My concept of
 "the formal Imago is constructed on the analogy of this concept of
 "formal freedom. It designates the human as human, the structure
 "of man's being which cannot be lost, and which is not affected by
 "the opposition origin in creation - sin. But in opposition to
 "Barth and in agreement with all the theologians of the Church up
 "to now, including the Reformers, I conceive this formal element,
 "man's being, as something which is not only far from being a
 "commonplace, but, on the contrary, as very relevant for theology.
 "What the Reformers expressed by the dubious concept of the Imago-
 "Remainder I, on the other hand, have expressed by a dialectical
 "relation to one another of the Imago-Origin and the humanity which
 "belongs to the sinner. The content of my concept 'formal imago'
 "is exactly the same as the content of the Imago-Remainder of the
 "Reformers." (99)

I cannot say that I find this explanation very enlightening.
 On the whole it seems to acknowledge that the formal imago has a
 certain, undefined content, but implies that this content has no
 relevance in itself and is merely formal relative to the material
 imago.

3. Relation of the formal imago to God.

The question of the relation of the formal imago to God is
 more easily and more satisfactorily settled. "The specific element

"in man, the human element, always contains this relation to God ...
 "In speaking of man's 'relation to God' I mean not only religion,
 "but something which forms part of every human act, whether it be
 "legal, artistic, scientific, moral, or religious. The more an act
 "is concerned with man as a whole - that is, is a central or total
 "act - the more clearly man's relation to God appears." (100) This
 relation to God is not something accidental but belongs to the very
 essence of the formal imago. "Man's relation to God is not some-
 "thing added to his human essence but is the kernel and basis of his
 "humanitas." (101) "Therefore there is no such thing as a neutral,
 "profane humanum that as such has nothing to do with God. The sinner
 "too, stands in relation to God, but in a perverted relation." (102)
 The nature of this relation is described at greater length in a note
 added to the second edition of *Nature and Grace*. "This formal imago
 "is not without relation to God. It belongs to the essence of man
 "as man that he is related to God whether he is a sinner or not. Only
 "this relation can be either the right or the perverted, that is being
 "under the wrath of God or under his redeeming grace. Subjectively
 "this relation is either the true knowledge of God or - tertium non
 "datur - the false 'knowledge' of God, i.e. idolatry. It belongs
 "to the nature of man as such, apart from faith or unbelief, sin or
 "redemption, that man is always in relation to God, that he therefore

(100) C.U.M. 155.

(101) M.i.W. 84.

(102) *ibid.* 160.

"always has 'either a God or an idol' as Luther said. Corresponding
 "to this he has either the *cognitio evangelica* or the *cognitio*
 "legalis and either a 'good' or a 'bad' despairing conscience, that
 "he is either a believer or an unbeliever. Man might therefore be
 "quite plainly defined as, 'The being which is always related to God,
 "'be it against God (hating God) or for God (loving God).'" (103)

The question of man's knowledge of this inalienable relation
 to God can best be discussed under the next point which is the re-
 lation of the formal imago to the material imago.

4. Relation of the formal to the material imago.

As we saw earlier the material imago is man as God created
 and intended him to be, man living in response to God's love and
 returning a grateful and obedient 'Yes' to God's call. The 'formal
 'imago' has been defined by Brunner as "the relation to the original
 "being of man or to the Imago which lies in the formal or personal
 "structure of man's being as such." (104)

Brunner's particular contribution to the problem of this
 formal imago is that the relationship of the formal to the material
 imago is not a quantitative one but is dialectical. This is ad-
 mittedly a difficult conception and it seems to be that the best
 approach is to consider some of the terms Brunner uses to describe
 the material and the formal imagos.

(103) N.u.G. 49-50.

(104) M.i.W. 546.

a. The dialectical concept of Person.

The term person may be applied to both the material and the formal imago indicating that there is an essential element of agreement in each. But the word person must be suitably and differently qualified in each case.

"As person man is a whole. His being as person rests on that imago. With the destruction of the relation to God the likeness to God is also destroyed. That does not mean that it is no longer there but rather this: that it is there as destroyed. The person is not lost, but the personal content of the person, the personal being, the being in the love of God, the fellowship is lost." (105)

In 'Nature and Grace' he differentiates the two aspects of personality as "personal (personhafte) person" and "contra-personal (widerpersönliche) person". The one is the 'quid' of personal being, the other the 'quod' (106), and a similar distinction is to be found in 'God and Man'. "Our personal existence is not thereby annihilated, the imago dei is not destroyed, we have not become inhuman, our humanity has been perverted, and that not merely in part, but altogether. We have not become beasts or even things through sin, we have remained personal beings, but in such a manner that we have lost our true personal being and have received in exchange a false mode of personal existence. That is we are sinners." (107)

(105) *ibid.* 129.

(106) *N.u.G.* 11.

(107) *God and Man.* Eng. Tr. 116-117.

In these passages the concept 'person' is a quasi-neutral one which is differently qualified according to whether the person is turned to God in obedient response, or from Him in an attempt at independence. It is difficult not to think of this in quantitative terms and to regard the 'person' as the foundation on which the differently qualified aspects of personality are imposed. But this is what Brunner rejects. His distinction is a categorical one not a quantitative one, and is to be dialectically understood.

b. The dialectical concept of responsibility.

The term 'responsibility' is used in the same way. This is the basic element in man's nature, that which gives it its characteristic quality and distinguishes him from the rest of creation. (108) It is not an attribute of personality but the very substance of his being as man. (109) In our discussion of the material imago, we saw that its essence was the response made by man to the Word of God in which and for which he was created. Responsibility in this sense was qualified as true or fulfilled responsibility. (110) It is being-in-the-Word-of-God (111) or in God's love. (112) Again it is distinguished as the formula of man's reality. (113)

Sin does not destroy man's responsible being but it is now differently qualified. It is no longer true and fulfilled

(108) C.U.M. 158.

(109) M.i.W. 38, 87, 89.

(110) *ibid.* 150. C.U.M. 159.

(111) M.i.W. 41, 87.

(112) *ibid.* 94, 95, 150, 158.

(113) *ibid.* 94, 151.

responsibility, but responsibility which is misunderstood and denied in practice. (114) Instead of a being in the Word and love of God it is a being in God's wrath and under the Law. (115) It is no longer the formula of man's reality but the formula of what he ought to be. (116)

Here again we have a term which is differently qualified but maintains the unity in difference. Again this difference is not to be understood quantitatively but dialectically. Responsibility certainly lends itself better to this mode of interpretation and the dialectical relation of the material to the formal imago can best be understood from a study of this concept of responsibility in its formal sense, i.e. the responsibility of sinful man.

5. Nature and Sources of man's responsibility.

Man, as we have seen repeatedly, is a responsible being. This is the core of Brunner's whole anthropology.

Not only is man responsible but he knows about his responsibility. This knowledge Brunner usually qualifies by saying that he knows his responsibility "in some way", "to some extent." (117) This means that while man knows that he is responsible he doesn't know why he is. That knowledge is only to be found in Christian faith.

(114) *ibid.* 39 f. 150.

(115) *ibid.* 96, 151, 158.

(116) *ibid.* 151.

(117) *ibid.* 62, 89, 152, 154-5.

Whence then comes this knowledge of his responsibility which is the possession of the natural man?

There are two sources of this knowledge and one of the aims of Brunner's theological work is to maintain the validity of these against the criticisms of Karl Barth, whose 'onesided genius' would abolish them from Protestant dogmatics.

There is the revelation of God given in the creation and capable of being apprehended by the natural man, at least to the extent of making him responsible. This has to be considered at length in a later section and, therefore, need not detain us now.(118)

Secondly, man has been so created in and for God's Word, that even in sin he has still some knowledge of God's Word, His Law and His Will, a knowledge which can only rightly be interpreted in Christian faith, but which, apart from that, is in itself sufficient to establish man's responsibility.

There is a general relation to God which has in it a certain knowledge of God. "Humanity even in the most formal sense is never "without relation to knowledge of God and to determination for Him. "Man as humanum is such a one that he 'must have a God' 'either the "'true God or a false one' (Luther, W.A. 47, 357 f.). There is no "idolatry without consciousness of God: man's idolatry is the sign "of his undestroyed but very much perverted relation to God "With the formal personality, with freedom and capacity for speech "(Wortfähigkeit) is the relation in the direction 'God' given

(118) *ibid.* 541, 543-4. N.u.G. II.

"The basic fact of humanity, power of speech (Sprachmächtigkeit) is,
 "if one goes to the root of the matter, if one understands it in
 "faith from its origin, nothing other than that standing under the
 "Word of God which cannot be lost, in responsibility, either as one
 "who says 'Yes' or 'No'. Man never stands outside this claim, that
 "is outside the Word of God; but stands either in the right relation
 "to it or the perverted, turned to God or turned from him but always
 "in responsibility which is the substance of his humanity." (119)

The very fact that man is a sinner and stands in a perverse
 relation to God and his true responsibility is a token that even for
 him the 'true light' had so shone as to give him some enlightenment.
 Just as fallen man is still borne and led by the divine providence
 so he is borne by the Word 'that upholds all things.' "And as man
 "he is, in distinction to all other creatures, so borne by it, that
 "even as one who is blinded he knows about it - even if it be per-
 "vertedly." (120)

More definite still is the statement where Brunner is dis-
 cussing man's claim to be the crown of creation. "His peculiarity
 "does not rest on his muscular powers or the acuteness of his senses
 "but in this, that he has part in the life of God, in God's thoughts
 "and God's Will, through God's Word." (121)

"Every creature is created through the Word of God, but man
 "is created not only through the Word but for the Word, and precisely

(119) "Anknüpfungspunkt". Z.d.Z. 1932. 522.

(120) M.i.W. 69.

(121) *ibid.* 101.

"therein created in the image of God. But we must not interpret
 "this statement as if, in addition to being created through the Word
 "of God, we were also destined, as an afterthought, for the Word of
 "God. Rather must we say that our specifically human existence -
 "and we have no other - consists precisely in our hearing the Word
 "of God. We are what we hear from God. We are men, and have our
 "existence as men through the Word of God which addresses us and
 "calls us into existence But to be in the Word of God is not
 "a passive, material existence, but a personal one, i.e. an exist-
 "ence in responsibility But that means that we do not cease
 "to be addressed by the Word of God even where in our decision we
 "turn away from God in our wills. In this sense there is for us
 "no absolute hiddenness of God, but only that hiddenness in which
 "the truth and the significance for our salvation of the divine Word
 "is hidden. Through sin the voice of God to us is not silenced,
 "but He speaks to us in another fashion than He wills to speak to us
 "in His true revelation." (122)

Here Brunner asserts that besides the revelation of God as
 redeeming love, the "true revelation" which has "truth and signifi-
 "cance for our salvation", there is another. God is not entirely
 hidden from the natural powers of even sinful man, but speaks to
 such in a different fashion.

(122) God and Man. Eng. Tr. 114-115.

This different manner of speech is the Law which is known to all men and brings to them 'a certain knowledge of God's will' sufficient, that is to say, to make man responsible for his sin. (123)

In an explanatory note on this qualifying word (irgendwie) Brunner says, "Even this 'irgendwie' is quite relevant in its indefiniteness. It corresponds to what the reformers call the 'cognitio legalis, which Paul attributes to the heathen in Romans ii. 'Luther - and Calvin, too, at times - was fond of expressing it thus, 'that the heathen know 'the second table' but not the first, i.e. 'that they understood the Law only as Law but not as God's gift of 'grace. Therefore it is no true, redemptive knowledge of God but 'that knowledge, standing in dialectical relation to the cognitio 'evangelica, which is the subject of the epistle to the Romans.'" (124) Brunner nowhere resolves the ambiguity which infects these references to the Law. At times he speaks as if the Law were distinct from the Gospel, another way in which God speaks to men, a revelation which gives some knowledge of Himself but not the final, redeeming truth. At others, Brunner suggests that what we know as the Law is God's true word which man in his sin mishears or perverts into a legalism. "It is not the law that is perverted, and it is not the God who "reveals Himself in the law who is perverted, an idol; but man's "understanding of the law, and therefore his legalistic understanding "of God and man, is perverted, and the God which he makes for himself

(123) N.u.G. 12.

(124) N.u.G. 46. cf. M.i.W. 51. 544.

"is an idol." (125) In sin man still hears the Word of God addressed to him, only so can he live, but sin distorts his hearing of it. Another ambiguity which likewise infects all Brunner's argument lies in his references to the Law now as an objective reality standing over against man, now as the subjective law of man's life in sin.

It is the revelation of the divine will and intention for us men which is given to us in the Cross of Christ that reveals to us the fact that we are not living in accordance with God's will but in opposition to it.

"It is there that we first know how irresponsibly we live. "This practical - factual denial of responsibility, this self-determination in opposition to it - precisely that is sin." (126) But though we thus cease to live responsibly God so overrules us that we neither cease to be responsible nor even cease to know what responsibility is. "Responsibility remains after as before the "characteristic formula of man's essential nature - for man in "apostasy as well as for man in origin. But responsibility is now "no longer the formula of his reality but only the formula of his "obligation, and thereby its significance is profoundly altered." (127) Man was created to live in love to God and his neighbour. Through sin he no longer loves God and his neighbour, but himself. Yet while he no longer loves God and his neighbour he ought to do so. By his sin man seeks to emancipate himself from God, but by the Law

(125) M.i.W. 163.

(126) *ibid.* 150.

(127) *ibid.* 151.

God keeps hold of him. "Out of the law of responsibility man cannot extricate himself: this iron ring surrounds his existence unbreakably and so preserves for it a remnant of humanity." (128) Therefore the Law and knowledge of the Law is the truly critical point in the relation between God and man. From the passage just quoted the Law would appear to be an objective reality which stands over against men. This is supported by many other passages in Brunner's exposition. It is in keeping with his basic contention that man's being is not to be understood except as existing in the Word of God. This Word in the divine intention is a word of grace and love and man's original and true being is life from love, in love and to love. Man's sin does not remove him from this Word of God and give him an independent being. "Man is and remains one who has his being and continuance in God's word and on that account and that alone, he is responsible. He does not cease to exist in God's Word, called by God and summoned to responsibility. But by his opposition his attitude to God who calls him is turned upside-down, and therefore even the call itself, from being the call of bestowing love, has changed into a commanding and accusing Law. The Law as that which actually determines human existence is the mark of both: that God's calling has not ceased, and that man's hearing is perverted. It is not the Law that is perverted, nor has the God who reveals Himself in the Law become an idol but man's understanding of God and himself from a legalistic standpoint is a

"perverted one, and the God he makes for himself is an idol." (129)

While in the appendix on 'The dialectic of the Law' he speaks of "the killing Law that differs from the Gospel that indeed in its "office and work is opposed to it." (130)

On the other hand Brunner speaks of "The Law of God that is "implanted in the hearts of all men," (131) and of "the problem of "the categorical imperative inherent in reason." (132) More definite still are the words in which he summarises his doctrine of the imago.

"The present humanity is not, as Catholicism teaches, the "true, original human nature (which now only lacks the donum super-"additum) nor is it, as Barth teaches, a theologically irrelevant "profane fact: but it is, in its purely formal character, that "which remains from the original relation of man to God. But it "is not sufficient to describe this element that remains - as the "Reformers do - merely quantitatively as a relic; it must be dia-"lectically understood, namely, as the legalistic structure "(Gesetzlichkeitsstruktur) of man's present being which is dialectic-"ally related to the Gospel, which firstly, is able to order human "life to some extent, secondly, maintains man of necessity in re-"lation to God - although a perverted one, thirdly, serves the Gospel "as a point of contact, but is at the same time, fourthly, the point "of greatest opposition and repulsion." "This is the abiding centre

(129) *ibid.* 165.

(130) *ibid.* 540.

(131) *ibid.* 157. cf. 152, 154.

(132) *ibid.* 534.

"of my theological thought, just as it is that of the reformation
"theology: the dialectic of Law and Gospel." (133)

This study of Brunner's doctrine of the formal imago shows that Brunner holds that man has as the foundation of his being a structural element in virtue of which he is able by God's grace to say 'Yes' to the Word which calls him into fellowship, and in virtue of which he is also able to say 'No' to the same call of God and assert his independence. But despite that power to say no, this same element holds man in relation to God. From it spring, of necessity, his morality and religion, which, while they give him but a perverted knowledge of God and relation to Him, yet form the point of contact for the Gospel of God's saving grace.

III B. 2. BARTH'S DOCTRINE.

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2. BARTH'S DOCTRINE.

A. Introduction.

Barth has no book comparable to Brunner's "Der Mensch in "Widerspruch" in which he expounds his doctrine of man, nor is he likely to write such a book. Yet no one can escape from the problem of man and his relation to God and Barth deals with this in a number of publications particularly in his Dogmatik and in the polemical pamphlet "Nein!" which he wrote in reply to Brunner's "Natur und Gnade." This vigorously expressed rejection of Brunner's doctrine is the best introduction to Barth's own point of view, so we may begin with a short account of the chief criticisms he there makes against Brunner.

B. Criticism of Brunner's Doctrine.

1. It contradicts the Reformed principles of the sola gratia and sola scriptura.

Barth's principle ground of criticism and condemnation is that Brunner's doctrine is in contradiction to the two basic principles of reformed theology - those of the sola gratia and the sola scriptura. These principles Brunner himself acknowledges and indeed claims to be his own. At the beginning of his exposition in 'Natur und Gnade' he explicitly says "It is a "question of the doctrine that in all questions concerning the "Church's preaching the Scripture alone should be judge. It "concerns the doctrine of the sovereign, freely electing grace

"of God, which out of free compassion in the Cross of Christ and
 "through the Holy Spirit bestows salvation on men who of themselves
 "can do nothing to save themselves, on men whose will is not free
 "but enslaved, and makes the word of the cross to be living know-
 "ledge for them. It concerns too the freedom of the church which
 "has its basis and its justification, its law and its possibility
 "simply and solely in this event of the divine revelation, and is
 "therefore free from all national and political bonds, over all
 "nations and states without any possibility of permitting herself
 "to receive either law or order from them. It is a question
 "therefore of the Church's message not having two sources, say
 "revelation and reason, or the Word of God and history." (1)

The natural theology which Brunner champions and expounds
 is, Barth complains, in contradiction to these principles at every
 turn.

To Brunner's claim that even sinful man is a responsible
 being since the formal imago has not been lost, Barth replies,
 yes, but if the formal aspect is to be honourably preserved does
 that fact make man other than one who is still utterly dependent
 on God's grace for revelation. If however it means that man in
 some way is able to enter into partnership with God what becomes
 of the principles to which Brunner has just given such unconditional
 acknowledgment?

(1) N.u.G. 5-6. Quoted in Nein! 15.

Brunner's views about the possibility of man knowing 'in some way' about God from nature and by his own unaided powers are also incompatible with the assertion that the imago dei is completely lost. Such a view inevitably leads to the acceptance of catholic doctrine and the rejection of that of the Reformation. "How can man, if we in fact know the true God from the creation, even without Christ or the Holy Spirit - how can man then say that materially the imago is "completely lost", "that in matters of the Church's preaching Scripture alone is judge and that man can do nothing to save himself? Is one not then rather obliged to attribute to him at least the possibility of preparation, at least a negative preparation for the knowledge of God in Christ, at least a potentia oboedientialis - as catholic theology has always done. Has Brunner not in fact now added something highly 'material' to that purely 'formal' (as we were so expressly assured) which he previously designated as man's 'capacity for revelation': a capacity man is shown, by actual fact, to possess, for a knowledge of the true God which, however incomplete it may be, is in spite of that real and therefore certainly not irrelevant for his salvation? . . . If he has really done that, then we are indeed fortunate in this, that we now understand somewhat better what he means by 'capacity for revelation.' But how can Brunner wish to do that? It still rings in our ears how audibly he professed the reformation

"doctrines of the Fall, Justification and the Holy Scriptures!

"Does he then no longer wish to do so? But what does he really
"want if he won't do that?" (2)

The relation of God and man in Brunner's doctrine of the "Erhaltungsgnade" comes in for the same criticism. It cannot be united with the reformed doctrine of the sola gratia and one or other must go in the end. If Brunner continues in this way, then he has no right to object to being classed with the Thomists or Neo-Protestants. The reception of "Natur und Gnade" both by the "German Christians" and Catholics should be sufficient to convince him of the justice of this reproach. (3)

2. Brunner's concern for the humanum.

Brunner's constantly expressed concern in putting forth the doctrine of the formal and material imagos is to give theological expression to the acknowledged difference between man and all other creatures, and to safeguard this humanum from false depreciation. Barth freely acknowledges the undeniable difference between man and the rest of creation but denies that this has any theological relevance. "Man even as a sinner is man and not a "tortoise" "that man is man and not a cat . . . is a truth "that is not to be contested." (4) But his reason does not thereby become "more fitted to determine the nature of God" (5) than

(2) Nein! 19-20.

(3) Nein! 22, 24, 27.

(4) *ibid.* 16. 25.

(5) N.u.G. 40.

anything else in the world. The mere fact that man is man has nothing to do with capacity for revelation. (6) In replying to the discussion on his address on "The Christian as Witness" at a student conference in 1934 Barth said "Certainly, we are neither "stones nor animals but men, quite nice men at that, yet Christ "could not help us except by dying for us. . . . Do not form "your judgment of men from uncontrolled thought but from what is "said about him in Scripture." (7)

3. The distinction between the formal and material imago.

The distinction between the formal and the material imago which Brunner has found so useful is one that breaks down, says Barth, because Brunner draws into the formal imago all manner of material qualities. "But assuming that Brunner were right and "we had some kind of criterion by which we might identify here "and there divine 'orders of creation' on the basis of instinct "and reason, what then ought one to think of Brunner's declara- "tion that these 'orders of creation' are not only known, but "also respected and 'to a certain extent fulfilled' by men who "do not know the God revealed in Christ? From what Christian, "be he ever so faithful, can one say that he realises to some "extent the ordinances of God? Is not just he 'a sinner through "'and through' who would be lost were not the Law fulfilled in

(6) Nein! 16.

(7) Barth. Der Christ Als Zeuge. T.E.h. 12. 20.

"Christ - in Christ, however, not only 'to a certain extent' but
 "completely, finally and sufficiently for us all? If man is
 "able even without Christ to fulfil the Law to 'a certain extent,'
 "how much more then must 'capacity for revelation' mean than
 "merely that formal; that man is just man, that is a responsible
 "and rational subject." (8)

If the 'material' imago is completely lost, as Brunner maintains, then the whole idea of man's possessing any capacity for God must go with it. If, in spite of sin and the Fall, God and man do meet and enter into fellowship then God himself must create the presuppositions. These have nothing whatever to do with the fact that man is still a human being and as such has still a formal imago. But Brunner fails to carry through this idea of a purely 'formal' imago. He enriches it with all kinds of 'material' qualities. "The sphere over which this 'capacity
 "'for being addressed' extends, includes not only the humanum
 "in the narrower sense but also all that is connected with the
 "'natural' knowledge of God." Yes, "the necessary, indispensable point of contact" that was still defined as the "formal
 "imago Dei", is now come into the open: "that, which the
 "natural man knows about God, the law and his capacity for God.
 "Out of the far distance there comes to us like the sound of
 "the fading thunder of a harmless, passing storm 'This quid of

"'the personality is negated by sin.' Not so very much was intended then by such sentences, by the distinction of the 'formal' and the 'material' imago Dei which was so impressive at first sight. The form was probably even then in secret a richly filled form. Under 'formal imago Dei' we ought even then to have understood 'the man', who even without revelation is able 'somehow' and 'to a certain extent' to know and do the will of God." (9)

4. The dialectical relation of nature and grace.

In Brunner's earlier essay on "The Question concerning the 'Point of Contact' as a Problem for Theology." (10) Barth recognises a different line of argument from that in "Nature and Grace." Barth is surprised that this point of view, which he regards as equally false and even more dangerous, does not appear in "Nature and Grace" but adds that, since it has not been expressly repudiated, it may reappear any day. His fears have been partially justified by the appearance of "Man in Revolt" in which Brunner drops the much criticised distinction between the formal and the material imago and adopts a line of argument more akin to that outlined in 1932. In "Man in Revolt", as in the earlier essay, instead of the point of contact being found in a directly identifiable continuity between nature and grace, reason and revelation as in "Nature and Grace", it was found in a dialectical

(9) *ibid.* 26-27.

(10) *Z.d.Z.* 1932. 505-532.

relationship of continuity and discontinuity, contact and opposition. The relation of that which constitutes the point of contact to the original imago dei in man is not that of a "remainder" to the whole as the Reformers expressed it, but it is "rather a "dialectical one: continuity and discontinuity, contact and opposition the one with the other. Man is, as a whole, sinner. But "that he is, as a whole, sinner presupposes that not only has he "not lost the formal humanity - and is not become an animal - but "that even now his relation to God is not destroyed (annihilated) "but that its direction and quality are perverted; he still remains responsible, but his responsibility now carries the character of guilt. He is not simply free from God, but he stands "under the divine wrath. Standing under the wrath of God is "objectively the same as that which subjectively is called bad "conscience or despair." (11) One more quotation will suffice to establish the identity of Brunner's doctrine here in 1932 with that in "Man in Revolt" in 1937. "All natural knowledge of God "is according to its true significance: knowledge of the wrathful "God, the deus nudus; it is therefore a despairing knowledge. "That the natural man does not perceive this despairing character "of his existence, that is his sin, his want of seriousness, his "blindness. That he imagines himself safeguarded instead of "being made insecure through his knowledge of God is the reason

(11) Z.d.Z. 1932. 523-4.

"why contact with it must at the same time mean contest with it. "Because, therefore, the contact does not take place at a neutral, "but at a negatively qualified point, therefore continuity and "discontinuity lie alongside each other, but so, that the continuity "is always concerned only with the 'that', the discontinuity always "with the 'what', which has the content." (12) Barth acknowledges the attractiveness, at first sight, of this type of natural theology after the model of Kierkegaard and Heidegger and admits that at one time this strain might be found in his own theology. According to this earlier theory man's possible reception of the divine revelation depends on the fact that there is a point at which the negative aspect of man's life comes to light in the phenomenon of the despairing conscience. This constitutes the negative point of contact and the aim of preaching and of theology is to lay this bare, as well as set forth the positive message of the grace of God. All that man can do here is to lay bare this point of contact. Brunner does not fail to add that the passage from ability to despair to true despair is not in our hands but depends on the grace of God.

This, says Barth, is to be rejected as firmly as the other. A study of the works of Erich Przywara, the Catholic theologian, would show Brunner how easily this theory can be interpreted in a good catholic sense.

(12) *ibid.* 525.

Brunner's doctrine is not without its element of truth. The relation between man's weakness, necessity and despair, and revelation is a recurring note in Scripture. (13) But these things have no necessary connection with the divine revelation. "As an immanent anthropological possibility it has no merit nor advantage over the various possibilities of a positive determination of our existence." (14) There is a sorrow of the world which worketh death and that those negative aspects of our life become the points at which the divine light breaks in upon our darkness is not due to any quality they possess in themselves, but to the grace of God who is able to use all conditions to His own glory. "They do not belong to that which man of himself is able to know about himself. They are 'points of contact' freshly appointed by God and not already present in man's nature. They are not, therefore, the object of a natural theology of the third article." (15)

5. Incompatibility with belief in the Holy Spirit.

A further criticism, that Brunner's doctrine of Nature and Grace in either of its forms is incompatible with belief in the Holy Spirit need only be mentioned here. We shall consider it in detail when we come to speak of Barth's doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit.

(13) e.g. I Corinthians i. 26 f. II Corinthians xii. 9.

(14) Dogmatik I. 2. 288.

(15) Dogmatik I. 2. 289. (For this whole section see Nein! 48-56; and Dogmatik I. 2. 287-289).

C. Barth's Views on Anthropology.

1. Answer to the complaint that he has no 'proper anthropology'.

In his review of Barth's first edition of the Dogmatic, Gogarten complained, among other things, that it lacked a "proper anthropology." "Here, it seems to me, in the lack of a proper anthropology, lies one of the two critical defects of the book. There are, it is true, suggestions for one but they are nowhere seriously worked out. This is specially noticeable in the chapter on the Revelation of God. If the course of theological inquiry is such as Barth describes it: '(1) The Word of God, '(2) Man's being known in the Word of God, (3) Knowledge of the 'Word of God through men,' then a thorough and not merely incidental anthropological investigation is of the utmost importance for dogmatics. Barth often takes up the cudgels against anthropology and its misuse in theology. One must agree with him in this so far as it concerns a quite definite anthropology, namely, that which corresponds to the scientific conception which is still widely spread to-day. But in order not to fall into this anthropology without being aware of it a special anthropological investigation is necessary." (16)

This objection has also been made by others, and it lies at the back of much of Brunner's criticism of Barth. This may be seen

(16) F. Gogarten. Karl Barths Dogmatik. Theologische Rundschau. 1929. 66.

most clearly in the essay on "The Question concerning the Point
"of Contact as a Problem for Theology" (17) and, more cautiously
expressed, in an earlier essay on "The other Task of Theology"
(18) as well as in "Nature and Grace" and "Man in Revolt." What
then is Barth's answer to this criticism, and what does he teach
about man?

Gogarten's concern for a theological anthropology was due,
in part, to a sense of the importance of this question for our
own day. Since the Renaissance man has been displaced from the
central position which he held in the Middle Ages as the crown
of creation. He has been forced to reconsider himself and in
that way has been driven in upon himself. Thus he has come to
study his own consciousness in a way that has led to the in-
tense interest in and development of psychology, on the one hand,
and the rise of humanism on the other. This has not been with-
out its effect on theology which, especially in Schleiermacher
and his successors, made the knowledge of the human heart in
its religious experiences the basis of its doctrines. (19)
Because, therefore, "the thought of the more recent period was
"most strongly moved by the problem of man himself, anthropology
"must therefore be regarded as the proper problem of any present-day
"theology."

(17) Z.d.Z. 1932. 505-532.

(18) Z.d.Z. 1929. 255-276.

(19) cf. F. Gogarten. Das Problem einer theologischen Anthropologie.
Z.d.Z. 1929. 503 ff. and
H.R. Mackintosh. Types of Modern Theology. 48, 61.

To this Barth replies that theology ought not to let herself be diverted from her proper task and have her problems set for her by the current intellectual fashions. "The question 'invariably remains whether in face of the alleged anthropologising of the modern (or once upon a time modern) living consciousness it is wise to follow in Schleiermacher's tracks, though under a different banner, and to take one's bearings by this living consciousness. Theology has far too frequently tried to seek out and to conquer the consciousness of a period on its own ground. . . Might not a theology, which simply refused to co-operate even in method with such 'humanisation of life,' also be more timely to-day - if that is the real point - than one which by its pronouncement admits from the start that she can only contribute a second word, a so-called 'word upon the situation,' the situation prevailing outside the Church?" (20)

Gogarten's second reason for urging the necessity and importance of a theological anthropology is one of method. "Must not thought begin with the man God became? Can we do other than start from the God who is in fact not isolated manwards, and does that not mean that thought must begin with the man?" (21) By 'man' Gogarten does not mean Jesus Christ but man in general as one who has ceased to be isolated from God. To this Barth

(20) Dogmatic I. 1. 144. cf. Credo. 112 f.

(21) Theologische Rundschau. 1929. 73.

objects on the ground that man has not the necessary qualities which would make him a suitable starting point for theological doctrine. "Is this man who has ceased to be isolated from God, "apart altogether from the one God-man, in a position to form "the possible or necessary starting-point of thought? This "conclusion was at least not yet drawn even by the old Lutheran "dogmatists, to whose Christology it might possibly have "approximated. But the man who did draw it was first Schleier- "macher, and then, from a bad motive, L. Feuerbach. Thus this "second, properly theological concern of Gogarten's seems to "me not only to carry little conviction, but to be, in substance, "thoroughly dubious." (22)

In his criticism of Barth's 'Dogmatic' for its lack of a "proper anthropology" Gogarten connected this with Barth's failure "to investigate thoroughly the question of the scientific "nature of theology, i.e. the question of the relationship be- "tween theology and philosophy and of all that is otherwise "involved in it." (23)

Gogarten's expressed intention was to reach an understand- ing of man from the Gospel itself or from the context of the whole of theology. (24) This Barth had tried to do in the first volume of his Dogmatic under the concept of "Church anthropology,"

(22) Dogmatic I. 1. 145.

(23) Theologische Rundschau 1929. 66 f.

(24) Das Problem einer theologischen Anthropologie. Z.d.Z. 1929. 493-511.

and he regards it as highly suspicious that Gogarten failed to see that or to give him credit for his good intentions in that direction. The explanation would seem to be that Gogarten's main concern was for the elucidation of the relations between theology and philosophy and this is confirmed by his intimation of his solidarity with Bultmann. "Yet if the service of anthropology is to make clear the relationship between theology and philosophy (and in harmony with Bultmann that certainly means "to derive the possibility of theology from the discoverable "relationship between philosophy and theology), how can we take "seriously the theological independence of anthropology as desired by Gogarten, and its derivation from the Gospel and solely "from the Gospel?"(25) It is the conviction that this cannot be done and that the attempt must sooner or later result in "handing over theology afresh to some sort of philosophy and so "losing the real theological theme" that led Barth to purge his second edition of any such anthropology. Such an attempt can only be made "within the realm of Catholicism, because the pre-supposition involved is that the revealed state of God in our "created state, the creation of man which is at the same time the "revelation of God, is somewhere and somehow directly discernible "by us, presumably because confirmed by the Gospel. This direct "discernment of the original connection between God and man,

(25) Dogmatic I. 1. 145.

"discernment of the creation of man which as such is also the
 "revelation of God, is, according to Reformed principles as to
 "the seriousness of sin, taken from us by the Fall and only re-
 "stored in the Gospel, in revelatio specialis." (26) Behind
 this rejection of anthropology there lies the protest against
 that humanisation of theology in the past two centuries, which
 Barth regards as the great apostasy of modern Protestantism.
 It was the recognition of this tendency in his former colleagues
 which led to the split between him and Brunner and Gogarten.
 "I must also ask in opposition to Brunner and Gogarten: Is
 "'God' now really more than another word for our neighbour?
 "The commandment more than another word for the natural orders
 "(Ordnungen)? Justification more than another word for life in
 "these orders?" (27)

But while Barth rejects all attempts to construct a
 doctrine of man on the lines suggested by Gogarten he recognises
 that there is a theological anthropology. The nature of this
 anthropology he describes with clarity and precision in the fifth
 of his Gifford Lectures. "If there were a special Reformed
 "doctrine of man, a special Reformed anthropology, it could in
 "point of fact only consist in the doctrine of sin. For man
 "in his separation from God and in his distinctive character
 "over against God is sinful man, i.e. man who is missing his way

(26) *ibid.* 147.

(27) Barth. *Das erste Gebot als theologisches Axiom*. Z.d.Z. 1933. 311. cf. also Barth, *Abschied*, Z.d.Z. 1933. 536 ff. ■ *Theologische Existenz heute*, 7. 31 ff.

"and violating the ordinance of his existence." But this man cannot be thus considered in the abstract. He has rebelled against God and sought to free himself from God but God has not left man to himself. "It is only too true that man goes his own way, the way of Adam. But it is a great deal truer that God goes this way of man's with him, makes it His own way and thereby changes it, makes it an entirely different way. He makes the way of man's rebellion the way of His own victory, the way of destruction the way of salvation and the way of the overthrowing of His ordinance the way of its restoration. But if this is the case, then the truth of man's way can only be seen and understood if viewed from the greater truth of God's way with man. In that case there cannot be a special Reformed doctrine of man, a special anthropology, which in the nature of the case could only be a doctrine of his sin. That being so the history of man and his sin can only be presented in the way in which we see it presented in the history of the man Jesus Christ." (28)

2. Man's alleged capacity for revelation.

One of the most important questions for Christian theology concerns the reception by man of the divine revelation. How does man receive it? Is it in virtue of some capacity given to him in the creation? This question, like the general anthropological

(28) The Knowledge of God and the Service of God. 46-48.
Quoted in future as K.G.

question, has become more and more important during the past few centuries and the general development of Protestant theology since the Reformation has been in the direction of answering it with a decided 'Yes'. If we did not possess some kind of faculty, or capacity, or possibility for revelation how then could we receive it?

Wär nicht das Auge sonnenhaft,
Die Sonne könnte es nie erblicken;
Läg nicht in uns des Gottes eigene kraft,
Wie könnte uns Göttliches entzücken? (29)

The origin of this movement was an understandable, and even in its way praiseworthy, desire to safeguard the subjective element in revelation against a cold and dead objectivism. Hence this movement has always been associated with earnestness and piety and cannot be condemned for want of Christian zeal. This development in Modern Protestantism can only be reproached with one thing, but this reproach must be made, says Barth. "It has "surrendered that knowledge which is sketched out unambiguously "in the New Testament, established in the doctrine of the Trinity "of the Ancient Church, maintained in the Middle Ages (though not "without ambiguity), and renewed in unforgettable fashion in the "reformed theology of justification and sanctification, the know- "ledge that the Holy Spirit is none other than the Spirit of "Jesus Christ, and it thus opened the door with only too much

"earnestness and piety quibuslibet deliriis et imposturis i.e. to
 "the acknowledgment of all possible strange Gods, down to those
 "we have to do with to-day." (30)

In a long and characteristic note Barth traces the development of this subjective interest in the hymnary which, he says, is the clearest and most accessible monument to this movement. He admits that open heresy is rarely to be found in modern hymn books but the hidden heresy can be more or less clearly traced. "It is the heresy of the third article in which the Holy Spirit "is regarded as different from the Spirit of Jesus Christ, professedly still the Spirit of God, a Christian Spirit, but in "reality the spirit of man's inner life and earnestness, the "spirit of mysticism and morality." (31)

In Schleiermacher, especially, this results in man becoming the main object of theological study. "He undertakes to "interpret Christianity itself in the form of a concretely historical analysis of human existence along the lines of a general "doctrine of man: 1. Man's meeting with God to be regarded as "a human religious experience historically and psychologically "fixable; and 2. This experience to be regarded as the realisation of a religious potentiality in man generally demonstrable ". . . These are the two cardinal propositions in philosophy of "religion in the 19th and 20th centuries. The decisive one is

(30) Dogmatik I. 2. 275.

(31) *ibid.* 280.

"naturally the second of these statements." (32)

Barth agrees that the Word of God is to be regarded as something which happens in and to the reality of man and only avoids using the words 'experience' or 'religious experience' to describe this because of their associations. It is also true, he agrees, that with this happening there must correspond logically and materially a possibility, an ability on the part of man. The question is whether there is indeed such an organ, or ability, or qualification of man as can be discovered by anthropological analysis. But when we remember that the Word of God is "the act of the free love of God" then man cannot "belong by any essential necessity to the concept of the Word of God." "God's Word ceases to be grace or grace itself ceases to be grace when we ascribe to man a disposition towards this Word, a possibility of knowledge independent of it and peculiar in itself, over against this Word." (33)

The basis of this modernist view is the philosophy of Descartes which regards man's experience of himself as the real foundation of certainty. Barth gives two quotations from representative Protestant theologians who definitely acknowledge this. "The I - experience is for man the foundation of the surest certainty of reality that is thinkable, that is possible for him at all. It is the presupposition . . . of all validation

(32) Dogmatic I. 1. 219.

(33) *ibid.* 221.

"of reality connected with the external world." (34) The other is from Karl Holl who "once formulated the fundamental proposition 'common to all alive to-day' and constituting 'the plumb-line of 'their religiosity', to this effect, that the proper way is to "acknowledge nothing as religiously valid, save what can be touched "in the reality presented to us and can be produced again from our "own immediate feeling." (35)

Against this no counter philosophy is of any avail. "The Fact of the Word of God in no respect nor yet in the very slightest degree receives its worth and validity from a pre-supposition which we apply to it; its truth for us, like its truth in "itself, is based purely upon itself. The procedure in theology "therefore is to base self-certainty upon God-certainty without "waiting for this beginning to be legitimised by self- certainty. "By the making of this beginning - and only by the making of it! - "it is then likewise - though only subsequently, incidentally, "relatively - legitimised by the necessary self-certainty." (36)

Barth also rejects a more subtle and more dangerous form of this same doctrine which he finds in E. Schaeder and G. Wobbermin. They do not hold that man in his own nature has a capacity for God. On the contrary they maintain that of himself man cannot reach any knowledge of God. He can only know God as God gives Himself to be known and reveals Himself as He must in

(34) Wobbermin. Systematische Theologie II. (1921) 455.

(35) K. Holl. Gesammelten Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte. B. III. 559.

(36) Dogmatic I.1. 223.

man's consciousness. "The way here in question leads from God
 "to man and not vice-versa from man to God. Man who is always
 "finding himself entangled in sin and guilt does not upon his
 "own initiative come upon the way to God. For sin and guilt
 "lead him right away from God. Only God can build up a con-
 "nection between God and man, bridge over the chasm torn open
 "by man's sin and always torn open afresh" (37)

But when God reveals Himself to man, man's being is en-
 riched by a new experience. His consciousness has now "a content
 "of divine spirit" which he can consider and investigate, his
 Ego has undergone "a characteristic inner transformation and an
 "enrichment of its content." He is no longer mere, natural man
 but the pardoned and religious man and as such his personal ex-
 perience becomes the "opposite pole" to the Word, which, while
 subordinate to it is a valuable "aid in method" to knowledge of
 the Word. "Thus in real experience of the Word of God man be-
 "comes an independent and therefore also an independently inter-
 "esting realisation of this experience and thereby also the
 "thing that makes it possible. There are religious men into
 "whose existence and nature the Word of God has entered and in
 "which it is therefore to be found, whose existence and nature
 "are therefore bound to become the storehouse of knowledge of
 "the Word of God and the first and decisive criterion and

(37) Wobbermin. Richtlinien ev. Theologie 1929. 102.
 quoted Dogmatic I. 1. 241.

"measure of it. Towards this thesis we must take up a position."
(38)

Here we are face to face with a decision of the gravest importance. On our answer depends our understanding of the criterion with which dogmatics has to work and therefore our understanding of the relationship of the Church to the truth in Jesus Christ, the Word of God.

If this were a question of human knowledge about things of this world we might say 'yes' and make the experiment. But when it comes to a question of the possibility of knowing the Word of God what can we find to fix and investigate in our own consciousness? "Is it not with us as with the man who wanted "to scoop the reflection of the fair silver moon out of the pond "in a sieve?" (39)

So far as the act of acknowledging the Word of God is a real event in human life it is bound up with others psychologically similar and we have no criterion whereby we can separate that which is genuinely the Word of God from the rest. When driven to the wall this theory can only fall back on direct, philosophical Cartesianism, on man's self-certainty.

We may now turn to a consideration of Barth's own views on man's possibility for receiving the Word of God and his interpretation of the imago Dei.

(38) Dogmatic I. 1. 243.

(39) *ibid.* 247.

D. Man's Reception of Revelation.

The Nature of Experience of the Word of God.

One of the most significant changes made by Barth in the second edition of the Dogmatic was the introduction of a chapter on "The Knowability of the Word of God," in which the place of experience and faith is recognised and acknowledged. In the earlier edition so little place was given to experience that it looked as if in revelation the human spirit was displaced by the divine, and that when we come to saving faith it is not we who believe, but the Spirit in us. In Dogmatic I. 1, however, a place is made for the recognition of experience "Faith . . . is "also a human experience. To this experience also a definite "human attitude will correspond, and this human attitude will also "find its expression in definite human thoughts." (40) Barth distinguishes true knowledge (Erkenntnis) from mere knowing (Kenntnis). In true knowledge the object known is so present to a man's mind, its truth so recognised and its importance so acknowledged that his life is of necessity brought into relation to it. "This event, this verification or proof we call, to "distinguish it from mere knowings, (Kenntnisen) knowledge "(Erkenntnis). A knowing becomes knowledge when a man becomes "a responsible witness to its content." (41) "Knowledge" is "that confirmation of human acquaintance with an object

(40) *ibid.* 208.

(41) *ibid.* 214.

Whereby its trueness becomes a determining factor in the existence of the man who knows. It is precisely this factor determining the existence of the man who knows that we call experience." (42)

Barth then proceeds to guard against possible misunderstandings on two sides.

On the one hand while the determination by the Word of God certainly takes place in an act of human self-determination it is not as such an act that it is experience of the Word of God. "No determination which man can give himself is as such determination by the Word of God." (43) Nor is man's self-determination a partner with the divine determination whereby man enters into co-operation with God, nor yet is man's self-determination secretly identical with the divine determination. Thus Barth distinguishes his views from the Pelagian, Semi-Pelagian and Augustinian. (44) These are all theories, Barth asserts, put forward by onlookers who are concerned to bring those two determinations, the one by God and the other by man, into some satisfactory relationship. But the man who actually experiences the Word of God knows that the togetherness of God and man which here takes place is not a togetherness on the same level which can be surveyed and assessed. God remains the

(42) *ibid.* 226.

(43) *ibid.* 227.

(44) *ibid.* 227-28.

sovereign Lord, and this means that "our very self-determination needs this determination by God in order to be experience of "His Word." (45)

On the other hand this does not mean that man's own self-determination is in any way set aside and that in experiencing the Word of God man is in a condition of either partial or complete receptivity and passivity. "It is precisely the man "who is placed in a real knowledge of the Word of God who re-cognises himself completely as existing in the action of his "life, as existing in his self-determination." (46)

Barth's undoubted aim and intention here is to safeguard the essential truth that in man's experience of the Word of God not only is the initiative with the Word but it has also creative power and is its own criterion. In his anxiety to maintain this Barth here uses language which appears to rob man's self-determination of its essential quality of responsible decision. (46a) This may, however, be set aside as we must later give it careful consideration. Continuing his exposition Barth shows how the "anthropological spot" at which experience of the Word of God takes place cannot be more closely determined. Man's whole nature, the will, conscience, feeling, intellect etc. is involved.

(45) *ibid.* 228.

(46) *ibid.* 229.

(46a) *ibid.* 229-230.

The experience of the Word of God which has thus been described is one which affects man's entire being.

a. There is no region in man's life which is the special vehicle of this experience, e.g. the will, conscience, intellect, or feeling. Entire theological systems have been reared on a preference for this or that anthropological region but they have always resulted in a very one-sided conception of religious experience and of the Word of God which was thus limited. "We need single out neither the will, in order to underline human freedom, nor conscience, as the place where man becomes one with the will of God, nor feeling, in order to make clear man's utter dependence upon the omnipotence of God." (47) Every aspect of man's being must be taken into consideration.

b. Neither is it necessary nor desirable to regard certain anthropological centres with suspicion and distrust, e.g. man's intellect. "Does not the anti-intellectualism of modern theology mean on the one hand an effort after holiness which rests upon self-deception regarding the other anthropological possibilities and must inevitably end in disillusionments, on the other hand a restriction of possible experience of the Word of God at its most crucial point which might very soon mean complete denial of it?" (48) If God's Word is to be communicated to man at all it must involve the activity of man's intellect.

(47) *ibid.* 230.

(48) *ibid.* 231-2.

There are undoubted dangers in this - as there are when we consider feeling, conscience, and will, as centres of religious experience - but these are not to be overcome by the arbitrary exclusion of the intellect. "If we must reject, as a more than "suspicious attempt at despotism, any calculated and preferential "treatment of Christian experience as the experience of feeling "or of conscience, indubitably we are also barred from assenting "to the exclusion of this particular anthropological centre." (49)

c. Neither is it necessary nor desirable to seek for unusual possibilities of human experience. The unconscious and the sub-conscious may well be centres of human experience. Man may have powers of intuition and even specifically religious feelings and intuitions. But these have no special value or significance compared to the other and better-known human faculties. "Even "the possibilities which come under review in these subsidiary "branches, both those generally acknowledged and the problematical, "are invariably possibilities of human self-determination. . . . "Their hiddenness and variety certainly do not qualify them as "points of entry for the determination of man by the Word of God. ". . . We do not say this in order to exclude these special "centres as centres of possible experience of the Word of God, "but simply in order to include them, together with the other,

"better known, anthropological centres, in the sum-total of
 "human existence, which claims our interest here as the object
 "of determination by the divine Word." (50)

This is so important for an appreciation of Barth's point of view that a further quotation, in which he summarises this, may be given. "If in experience of the Word of God the point "is the determination of human existence, and so of human self-determination by the Word of God, by self-determination is to be "understood the activity of the combined powers, in the activity "of which man is man, without fundamental emphasis upon and "without fundamental rejection of this or that human possibility. "All such emphases or rejections are in this context to be re- "fused on the score of method, because they are the results or "presuppositions of a general philosophical anthropology, by the "constructions of which we dare not let ourselves be influenced "here whatever right or wrong they may possess on their own "ground. Determination of a man's existence by the Word of God "when viewed from various sides may equally well be regarded as "a determination of feeling, as of will or of intellect; psychol- "ogically considered in the concrete instance, it may even "actually be more the one than the other. But in substance it "is definitely a determination of the whole self-determining man." (51)

The term Barth uses to describe "experience of the Word of

(50) *ibid.* 232-3.

(51) *ibid.* 233.

"God, i.e. determination of the whole self-determining man by the "Word of God" he calls acknowledgment. (Anerkennung). To this term he gives a nine-fold definition. It involves knowledge and a relationship to a Person, and such a recognition of that person that "acknowledgment of the Word of God by a man consists "in admitting that he bows before the purposes of God expressed "in God's Word." (52) Since Jesus Christ is no dead fact of history but a living presence, "experience of the Word of God "must at least also be experience of His presence and ... acknow-
 "ledgment of His presence." (53) God's Word being the power of God "to have experience of the Word of God is to give way be-
 "fore its superiority." (54) It is also decision, and since God's Word is never fully open to us, experience of the Word calls for acknowledgment of its mystery. This acknowledgment of the mystery of God's Word means that our relation to it is never static but is always a movement, never an attitude but always "letting oneself continually be led, continually taking
 "the step, continually being in movement from the experience felt
 "at one time, from the thought grasped at one time, to the
 "opposite experience and thought, because hearing the Word of
 "God always consists of a simultaneous hearing of the one in the
 "other and the other in the one. In this movement, which cannot
 "be brought to rest in any synthesis, a man acknowledges the

(52) *ibid.* 235.

(53) *ibid.* 235.

(54) *ibid.* 235.

"mystery of the Word of God and he has Christian experience." (55)

The ninth of these explanatory definitions is the most important for us here. Acknowledgment involves giving way to that which is acknowledged. "This is not in contradiction to the concept of self-determination, but it means that as such the self-determination of this man takes place at a definite point and in a definite context. It has found its beginning and ground in another higher determination. In the act of acknowledgment the life of man, without ceasing to be the self-determining life of this man, has its centre, its direction, the meaning of this attitude it takes up, also the criterion as to whether this attitude really has the corresponding meaning - all this it has outside of itself, in the thing acknowledged. . . . Acknowledgment as an attitude is out and out the act of the particular man and yet, looked at from the side of the meaning of this attitude, it is likewise not his act at all but a determination befalling him due to the thing acknowledged, the thing which forces his acknowledgment. First of all, there is the thing acknowledged, then, and in consequence and in the long run completely due to it, there is acknowledgment." (55a)

Since experience of the Word of God is always the creation of the Word itself and is only sustained by the Word, we can

(55) *ibid.* 237.

(55a) Dogmatic I.1. 237.cf.Dogmatik I.2. 290. 409-412.

never have it as our own possession, a possession which we can make the object of our reflections and therefore a source of our theology. In the experience of the Word of God we are so determined by it that our lives are transformed, and a new life comes into being, a life which like the experience exists only from and in the Word of God. "In the act of such acknowledgment a new reborn man will arise as one addressed by God and listening to God - of course unknown as such to himself and others, in a newness that cannot be fixed; what can be fixed will in his case always be what is old - not possessing himself; so far as he possesses himself, he will certainly not possess this newborn man - but it will be true that he is kept in the peace of God which passes all understanding." (56) This is the miracle of faith and the work of the Holy Spirit and to a consideration of Barth's views on these two subjects we must now turn.

E. Barth's Doctrine of Faith.

1. Faith as Experience.

At few points is Barth's doctrine more clearly distinguished from that associated chiefly with the name and influence of Schleiermacher than on this question of faith. Schleiermacher can speak of faith as "a purely factual certainty, but a

(56) *ibid.* 254.

"certainty of a fact which is entirely inward." and further describe it as "nothing other than the incipient experience of the "satisfaction of our spiritual need by Christ: there can still "be very diverse ways of experiencing the need and the succour, "and yet they will all be faith" (57)

In the earlier stages of his reaction to this subjectivism Barth tended to speak as if the experimental character of faith had no validity. The psychological processes which were the necessary accompaniment of faith must be ignored and consideration given to the event which is Divinely wrought on and in man. (58)

In the second edition of the Dogmatic he has, as we have seen, modified these views and made room for experience as well as the Divine event. "Faith, of course, is also a human experience. To this experience also a definite human attitude "will correspond, and this human attitude will find its expression in definite human thoughts." (59) Again he says "In faith "men have real experience of the Word of God, and no finitum "non capax infiniti, and no peccator non capax verbi divini either, "should now hinder us from taking this statement seriously with "all its consequences." (60)

Yet he still insists that the fundamental and really important thing is not the experience but the Word of God to

(57) Schleiermacher. The Christian Faith § 14. 1. 2.

(58) Der Römerbrief. 15.

(59) Dogmatic I. 1. 208.

(60) *ibid.* 272.

which it is related, and which alone decides whether experience has the character of true faith or not. This is brought out clearly in all the definitions of faith which Barth supplies in his more recent publications. "To have faith means to allow "to God, the world and ourselves true and real existence of the "kind declared and laid down for us through the action of God "in Jesus Christ in the past, in the present and in the future. "To have faith means to live as a man who is faced by Jesus "Christ." (61) Whether one emphasises the aspect of trust or of obedience in the experience of faith matters little compared with the recognition that faith can only be understood from its object, Jesus Christ. "Faith in the New Testament is under all "circumstances faith in Jesus Christ." (62) Faith is no dark, formless feeling but a clear hearing, thought and knowledge and therefore also speech and act. It has, however, no control over its object, but is mastered by it. (63)

2. Faith not the result of our powers.

Faith, he constantly reminds us, is not something which arises in our hearts because of any capacity or power which we possess in ourselves. Nowhere is this more forcibly expressed than in his Gifford Lectures where, commenting on the statement in the Confessio Scotica that "This our Faith and the assurance

(61) K.G. 104.

(62) Dogmatik I. 2. 342. cf. 131.

(63) *ibid.* 561. cf. K.G. 25 f.

"of the same, proceeds not fra flesh and blude, that is to say,
 "fra na natural poweris within us, bot is the inspiration of the
 "holy Gost," Barth says.

"If faith is the life of the man who faces Christ as the
 "one from whom alone he receives his salvation, then it is easy
 "to understand that the man who lives in faith, when he is con-
 "fronted by the faithfulness of God, sees himself of his own
 "unfaithfulness. . . . Such a man will see that he is in no
 "position to have faith in himself, or to ascribe to himself a
 "capacity or power by means of which he himself could somehow
 "bring about his salvation, or co-operate in bringing it about.
 ". . . That man is more or less religiously inclined - if it
 "is true - may well be a good thing. But the man who really
 "has faith will never consider his faith as a realisation or
 "manifestation of his religious life, but will on the contrary
 "admit that his capacity for religion would in itself have led
 "him to the gods and idols, but by no means to Jesus Christ.
 "The man who really has faith knows the truth of the sentence of
 "the Confession quoted above, that it is impossible for him by
 "his own efforts to have faith . . . Faith is not an art, nor
 "it is an achievement. Faith is not a good work of which some
 "may boast, while the others with a shrug of their shoulders
 "can excuse themselves by saying that they have not the capacity
 "for it. With faith itself comes the conclusive insight; that

"no one has the capacity for faith by his own effort, that is
 "either the capacity to prepare for faith or to start it, or
 "to persevere in it, or to perfect it. The man who has faith
 "will understand the man who does not possess it, the sceptic
 "or the atheist, better in this respect than they will under-
 "stand themselves. For he will consider this incapacity for
 "faith not merely to be accidental, as does the non-believer, but
 "he will consider it to be inevitable. Let us hear the Confes-
 "sion itself. 'For of nature we are so dead, so blind and so
 "'perverse, that nether can we feill when we are pricked, see the
 "'licht when it shines, nor assent to the will of God when it is
 "'reveiled.' We have as little share in our rebirth as we have
 "in our being created or as we have in what Jesus Christ has
 "done for us. 'For of our selves we ar not sufficient to
 "'think one gude thoct . . .' That is a hard saying, but note
 "that it is not unbelief but faith that speaks in this way.
 "Unbelief has, at all times, spoken quite differently." (64)

3. Faith exists only by its object - Christ.

The next thing Barth has to say about faith is that as
 faith does not arise through the operation of any powers of
 capacities we may possess so too it is not the experience, how-
 ever perfect its form, however keenly it may be felt, that makes
 it to be faith. "But it is the Word, it is Christ, to whom

"faith is related, because He gives Himself as object to it, who "makes faith into faith, into real experience." (65) On this Barth has a long historical note in the course of which he shows that in Luther as in Anselm "where faith is it has its ground "and its truth and its measure, not in itself as an action and "experience of man, but, although it is a human action and experience, beyond itself in its object, in Christ or in the Word "of God." (66)

Even where, as among the Reformers and in the old Protestant theology faith is interpreted as *Fiducia*, trust, confidence this "has nothing to do with pushing the reality of faith out of "the object of faith into the believing subject." (67) "*Fiducia* "signifies, no less than *notitia* and *assensus*, the connection of "faith with its objects." (68) As faith arises from the Word of God so too it consists wholly in the Word. We cannot turn from it to contemplate ourselves as possessing faith or being capable of believing. Faith is only ours for use as we wait upon the Word, like the manna with which the children of Israel were fed in the wilderness. (69). In this connection Barth quotes with approval the words of Paul Althaus, "I know not "whether I believe, but I know in whom I believe." (70)

(65) Dogmatic I.1. 263. cf. Dogmatik I.2. 568-9.

(66) Dogmatic I.1. 268.

(67) *ibid.* 268.

(68) *ibid.* 269-70.

(69) Exodus XVI.

(70) Dogmatic I.1. 271.

4. The nature of the imago dei.

While faith lives by its object it is nevertheless a real human experience and in faith men are made fit to apprehend the Word of God. This being so there must be for man in faith a real conformity with God. "Apprehension of the Word of God "could not take place, were there not in and along with this "event something in common between God who speaks and man who "hears, an analogy, a similarity, for all the dissimilarity involved in the difference between God and man, a "point of "contact" between God and man." (71) This is what theological anthropology calls the "image of God" in man.

The statement in Genesis I. 26 f. that "God created man "ad imaginem et similitudinem ipsius," i.e. to be the image and likeness of Himself, is misunderstood in the Greek Septuagint and this misunderstanding has been widely spread. It consists of regarding "what was described here as a condition or quality "of being God's exact likeness, imparted to man at the creation "and attaching to his existence thenceforward, so that we would "have to ask in what respect this condition of being like God "is really to be perceived now in man as man, or in what respect "it was to be perceived in Adam. We would then have to ask if "for example man's reason or his humanity was the image of God. "For answers of this nature men will seek in vain. For the

(71) *ibid.* 273.

"text speaks not of a quality, but for that for which man's
 "'nature' is appointed in his existence, life and action." (72)
 But man rebelled against the divine ordinance which governed his
 being and rejected the vocation for which he was created. Thus
 "the very ordinance under which he as man was justified in his
 "human nature now becomes his judgment. . . . Man has now be-
 "come a tarnished mirror in which the glory of God can no longer
 "be reflected. To be man means now to be an enemy of God. . .
 "To exist as God's creature means now to be subject to death
 "and eternal death at that. . . . Ecce homo, such is man. And
 "he is so beyond recovery, i.e. it is impossible for him to
 "annul even one of these consequences of his sin." (73) Hence
 Barth rejects Brunner's view that the "image of God" is the
 humanity and personality remaining over to sinful man from the
 creation. "As a possibility for God proper to man qua creature
 "the 'image of God' is not only, as we say, with the exception
 "of some remnants ruined, but annihilated . . . Man's capacity
 "for God, however it may be with his humanity and personality,
 "has really been lost." (74)

If there were a special Reformed doctrine of man or
 anthropology it could only consist in the doctrine of sin since
 this is man's distinctive character in his rebellion against God.

(72) K.G. 42.

(73) *ibid.* 50-51.

(74) Dogmatic I.1. 273.

But God being God does not leave man to his own devices. He comes seeking man in Jesus Christ His Son and thus "God goes this way of man's with him, makes it His own way and thereby changes it, makes it an entirely different way. . . . But if this is the case, then the truth of man's way can only be seen and understood if viewed from the greater truth of God's way with man. . . . That being so, the history of man and his sin can only be presented in the way in which we see it presented in the history of the man Jesus Christ." (75)

It is because man is reconciled with God in Jesus Christ that we can still speak of an image of God in man which constitutes the real point of contact for the Word of God. (76) This image is one which is "awakened through Christ from real death to life." (77) The image and point of contact exists only in faith and not in anything man possesses in and for himself. "Thus this point of contact also, like everything become real in faith, i.e. through the grace of reconciliation, can only be spoken of theologically, and not philosophically." (78) This interpretation of the nature of the divine image in man is the consequence of a right appreciation of the relation of the Creator and the creature. "If creature is to be strictly understood as a reality willed and placed by God in distinction from

(75) K.G. 47-48.

(76) Dogmatik I. 2. 336.

(77) Dogmatic I. 1. 273.

(78) *ibid.* 273-4.

"His own reality; that is to say, as the wonder of a reality,
 "which, by the power of God's love, has a place and persistence
 "alongside of His own reality then the continuity between Him
 "and it (the true analogia entis, by virtue of which He, the
 "uncreated Spirit, can be revealed to the created spirit) - this
 "continuity cannot belong to the creature itself but only to the
 "Creator in His relation to the creature. It cannot be taken
 "to mean that the creature has an original endowment in his
 "make-up, but only as a second marvel of God's love, as the in-
 "conceivable, undeserved, divine bestowal on His creature. . . .
 "The sayings, 'God has made us for Himself' and 'man made in the
 "'image of God' are not to be taken as meaning an abiding and
 "sure fact of revelation that we have once and for all made our
 "own, but it is a process of revelation, which, in the strictest
 "sense, is first coming to us and to come, moment by moment, if,
 "as we should, we have taken seriously what is meant by the
 "Deity of the Creator Spirit." (79)

5. The analogia fidei.

In rejecting the Catholic doctrine of an analogia entis Barth does not seek to deny that there is an analogy, or similarity between God and man. Only so can the Word of God be apprehended by man. The analogy is not one of being but of faith, the ἀναλογία τῆς πίστεως of Romans XII. 6. and of the Pauline passages

(79) The Holy Ghost and the Christian Life. Eng.Tr. 14-16.
 cf. Dogmatic I.1. 275-277.

where the human knowledge of God is converted into man's being known by God. "It is the divine act of knowledge, performed "not through man but upon man, which distinguishes him whose "knowing is grounded in the love of God, and so in real fellow- "ship with Him, in the presence of God. But this being known, "the divine possibility, even in the Christian remains distinct "from the human possibility of knowing; the latter cannot ex- "haust the former, the resemblance, the analogy remains." (80)

In faith man is brought into a likeness to God which makes the reception of God's Word possible. This is never something which man can achieve of himself it is the miracle of the divine grace wrought in man by the work of the Holy Spirit.

F. Barth's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

1. The miracle of the Holy Spirit.

The revelation of God in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God, is the incomprehensible miracle of the divine love. But, while the Incarnation of the divine Word in a human life and the witness of prophets and apostles to this event constitutes the objective side of God's self revelation, this is not revelation until it has been received by man for whom it is intended. But man, of himself, cannot receive the divine revelation. "Just as our spirit cannot produce the Word of God, so too, it

(80) Dogmatic I. 1. 279.

"it cannot receive it. Of course, our spirit is able to hear Bible texts, or some Biblical theology, whether home-made or a foreign import, or the voice of its own or a stranger's experience of life. But it is incapable, unassisted, of hearing God's Word." (81) Just as the objective side of revelation is the work of God Himself and God alone so too is the subjective side of revelation, the reception of the divine Word in human hearts and lives, His own work. "The created spirit is in no wise 'open upwards' in itself: it is not within the compass of any cleverness or ability of mine, but it is purely and simply the office of the Holy Ghost to be continually opening our ears to enable us to receive the Creator's Word." (82) That this happens to us men is a miracle of the divine love which we cannot comprehend but to which we can only bear witness. "A sheer miracle must happen to him, a second miracle in addition to the miracle of his own existence, if his life shall be true Christian life, which is a life within the hearing of God's Word. This miracle is the office of the Holy Ghost. In the Holy Ghost the man exercises faith . . . In the Holy Ghost he hears God's Word." (83) The Word of God which we thereby hear does not become our own possession, nor, having once heard it, are we able to recognise it again. "It is beyond any ability of

(81) The Holy Ghost. 24-5.

(82) *ibid.* 22.

(83) *ibid.* 26-27.

"ours to awaken ourselves to this hearing, or to produce it or
 "to keep it in ourselves. . . . In actual fact we can only
 "hear in the action itself, in the divine assurance within our
 "own human lack of assurance, which corresponds to the fact that
 "this hearing is the miracle of God. It can, and must, be said
 "further, that we are only able to hear as we pray: 'I am a
 "sojourner on earth, hide not Thy commandments from me.' (84)
 "Only in the miracle of the Holy Ghost are they not hidden from
 "us. But who could, or also would only pray for the revelation
 "of those commandments, if they had not already become revealed
 "to him whilst praying, in the miracle of the Holy Ghost?"(85)

2. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ.

Thus revelation is not the result of the co-operation of
 God and man, a synthesis of divine and human elements. On the
 subjective as well as on the objective side it is the work of
 God. "God's revelation in its subjective reality is the Person
 "and work of the Holy Spirit." (86) That means that it can
 only be understood, not by free speculation, but from Christ.
 "If one really desires to inquire into the subjective possibility
 "of revelation and thus to understand the Holy Spirit and its
 "work one mustn't concern oneself with any subjective reality
 "as such, in which it might be either supposedly or actually

(84) Psalm CXIX. 19.

(85) The Holy Ghost. 27.

(86) Dogmatik I. 2. 254.

"visible and experienced. But one must concern oneself with
 "where it comes from and what it brings, with the content of the
 "Hand which God thereby reaches out to us and with the love of
 "God which is thereby poured into our hearts, with the objective
 "of our fellowship with Christ; therefore with Christ Himself."
 (87)

"The Holy Spirit is not some unknown fluid which can mean
 "different things at different times, nor is He a magic charm.
 "He is the Spirit of Jesus Christ." (88) Barth raises his voice
 in vigorous protest against the manner in which, in modern Pro-
 testantism, the Holy Spirit is set aside.

One aspect of this protest we have already mentioned in
 §2 where we saw how Barth accuses modern Protestantism of having
 surrendered the knowledge that the Holy Spirit is none other than
 the Spirit of Jesus Christ and set in its place the spirit of
 the religious man. This need not, therefore, detain us here
 except to emphasise the positive side of his protest in the
 absolute identification of the Holy Spirit with Jesus Christ.
 "It is surely one of the most obvious lines of the New Testament
 "message, in the Gospels and the epistles as well as in the
 "apocalypse, that the Holy Spirit comes not from anywhere but
 "from Christ Himself and with Him absolutely everything that
 "makes the Church a Church and the Christian a Christian.

(87) *ibid.* 271.

(88) K.G. 172.

"Grace - no matter whether we understand it more as the grace of
 "forgiveness or more as that of sanctification and endowment -
 "is His grace. Faith is faith in Him and only faith in God as
 "it is awakened and mediated through Him. The gifts of the
 "Spirit in the Christian community are absolutely subordinated
 "to Him as its Lord and measured by Him. The apostles are His
 "servants, their word His commission and its content, in ever
 "new ways, is witness to Him and Him alone. Therefore all side
 "tracks, which are not lacking, are only in appearance ways into
 "a subjective which is interesting in itself, in reality they
 "return ever again to the one thing which the New Testament has
 "to say, to the objective." (89)

Where revelation and fellowship with God is regarded as
 the result of co-operation between God and man, instead of being
 the work of God's grace overcoming not merely our inability to
 know Him but that hostility towards God which is the essence of
 sin, there the Holy Spirit is misunderstood and set aside.
 "When man's own action, whatever its pretence or form, is made
 "into a condition with regard to fellowship with God, then the
 "Holy Ghost has been forgotten, then sin will be done to overcome
 "sin." (90) Barth traces this back to its roots in Augustine's
 "doctrine of grace as 'the inspiration of good will and of works,'
 "and faith as the impartation of man's own ability to will and

(89) Dogmatik I.2. 272-3.

(90) The Holy Ghost. 30.

"to perform what was commanded by the law." (91) Despite the reservations which Augustine makes his doctrine really means that "sinful man's fellowship with God is conditional upon the "power of God's grace to bring about a gradually increasing "transformation of the sinner into a non-sinner." (92) This has passed into Protestant theology so that it can say of grace "It is divine gift and man's creative action combined in one"(93) Against this "poison and corruption" Barth protests because "it "only exalts 'synergism' in order to set it right away in the "front line, and ultimately in power. In a more polished and "more dangerous manner than Pelagianism and the Greek doctrine "of (man's) freedom set it forth, this modern form places man's "own work - the whole of work - righteousness in its inner and "outer features (such as morality and mysticism, all human "strivings after holiness and merit) - under the prefix of pre-"destination and of grace and of loftiest humility. This is "why it is not wholly good, and in this manner sin at the same "time speaks sanctimoniously, and the sovereignty of grace is "made null and void." (94) To regard man's action as but another aspect of God's grace, and to lay emphasis on man's religious fervour or moral earnestness as well as on the Holy Spirit is to misunderstand the seriousness of sin. "Sin is

(91) *ibid.* 31.

(92) *ibid.* 33.

(93) Troeltsch *Glaubenslehre.* 343.

(94) *The Holy Ghost.* 35.

"not taken in deadly earnest when it is regarded as something
 "that can be radically overcome by the enthusiasm of 'good in-
 "'tentions,' and then, by and by, can be removed by practical
 "activity. You may cure a wound by such treatment but you
 "cannot restore a dead man to life." (95) "A dead person can
 "only be raised, resurrected, and grave sin can only be forgiven.
 "And we cannot make this removal evident in the figure of a
 "changing of man's attitude." ". . . We are compelled to believe
 "this as God's action, without our seeing it. What we can make
 "evident to ourselves is always our own activity." (96) What we
 take to be the work of the Holy Spirit is but the operation of
 our own spirit which seeks to maintain its independence. "This
 "is the spirit of hostility towards grace, and is sin in its
 "proper nature and its total seriousness." (97) The Holy Spirit
 by which God is revealed and we are reconciled to God is always
 in opposition to our spirit and never even indirectly identical
 with it. (98)

To think otherwise is to miss the significance of the
 fact that God Himself had to come into the world in the person
 of His Son in order to redeem men. It is also to minimise the
 heinousness of sin through failing to realise that it involves
 man not only in loss but in spiritual death. (99)

(95) *ibid.* 36.

(96) *ibid.* 38.

(97) *ibid.* 38.

(98) *cf.* Dogmatic I.1. 528 f.

(99) Dogmatik I.2. 280.

G. The Eschatological Nature of these Doctrines.

All that has been said about faith and the Holy Spirit is to be understood as true not of man's present existence but as a promise concerning the future. "Everything that is to be said about the man who receives the Holy Spirit, as driven and filled by the Holy Spirit, is in the New Testament sense an eschatological pronouncement. Eschatological means not 'with an improper or unreal intent' but 'related to the ἐσχατον,' i.e. to what from our point of view is still in arrears for our experience and thought, to the eternal reality of the divine fulfilment and completion." (100) Only from this standpoint, which recognises that God is the source and measure of all reality, that eternity exists first and then time, that therefore the future precedes the present, since the Creator exists before the creature, can the present be rightly understood. "Precisely and only eschatological pronouncements, i.e. pronouncements related to this eternal reality, may, as pronouncements upon temporal circumstances, claim to have a real and proper intention." (101)

H. Conclusion.

The argument in the foregoing pages has, I hope, made it quite clear that Barth's polemic against Brunner is not directed to this or that detail of Brunner's doctrine but to its very

(100) Dogmatic I.1. 530-1.

(101) *ibid.* 531.

essence. Brunner's professed aim is to vindicate man's part in revelation and to show how it is related to the Divine. This Barth rejects in both its cruder and its finer forms, maintaining that man is without any capacity for co-operation with God in the act of the divine self-revelation, which is wholly and solely God's work in man. Barth recognises the place of human experience in the reception of revelation but denies that there is any observable continuity, either direct or dialectical, between the experience and the revelation. The relation of the divine and human elements in revelation is a mystery comparable to that of the relation of the divine and the human elements in the Incarnation. It is known to faith but not to sight. In other words we can speak of man in revelation theologically, but not philosophically and theologically.

Nowhere is this more clearly expressed by Barth than in the words with which he closed the first series of the Gifford Lectures.

"Everyone comes to have faith, can have faith, and has faith who does not try to evade the action of God in His revelation in Jesus Christ, but stands firm, and therefore receives the salvation effected through Jesus Christ as a divine salvation and also as the salvation specially appointed for him. Whoever does that, possesses - by doing it - also the freedom, the opportunity and the capacity to do it. Is it

"his own freedom - a freedom that he already possessed before
 "he did this? Is it a freedom which, so to speak, he brought
 "with him, and has now simply applied in making the decision
 "to believe instead of not to believe - just like the freedom
 "by virtue of which we can decide to cross to the right instead
 "of to the left hand side of the street? Is it therefore a
 "freedom which belongs to the human mind? No-one who really
 "believes has yet understood and described his freedom to be-
 "lieve as a freedom which he possessed before, and brought with
 "him. On the contrary, by receiving what he was permitted to
 "receive from Jesus Christ, he confessed and acknowledged that
 "the fact that he did receive (instead of refusing to receive)
 "was itself the receiving of a divine gift - God's faithfulness
 "reaching over and grasping him, and in this he, who found in
 "himself nothing but unfaithfulness, could only see an undeserved
 "act of kindness and an incomprehensible miracle. Was it then
 "a spell, a piece of magic or a marvel? No, he really did re-
 "ceive here, while in possession of his mind, understanding,
 "will and all his five senses. He was not an extraordinary sort
 "of man, and it was nothing extraordinary which happened when he
 "believed instead of not believing. It was in itself nothing
 "more out of the ordinary than if he had crossed from the left
 "to the right hand side of the street. He was not passive. On
 "the contrary, he acted. He made no sacrificium intellectus.

"On the contrary, he thought, and that, it is hoped, as rigorously
 "and consistently as it is possible for a man to think. It was
 "not a matter of putting the intellect to sleep. He sank into
 "no mystic trance. On the contrary, he was as wide awake and as
 "sober as it is possible to be. And what of his religious nature?
 "He probably manifested too his capacity for religion! In short,
 "everything came about in a perfectly human way. He was no stone
 "or log, to which something had happened without his knowing or
 "willing it, but on the contrary, he made a decision, in the way
 "in which men are accustomed to make decisions. So hidden was
 "the real change of life which took place in him, when it really
 "came about that he believed instead of not believing. But the
 "fact that he did come to this decision, that he really believed
 "and thathe actually had freedom to enter this new life of
 "obedience and hope - all this was not the work of his spirit,
 "but the work of the Holy Spirit. No one who has really had
 "faith, has understood his faith in any other way. And the whole
 "of Scripture bears us witness that it is impossible to understand
 "faith in any other way. The possibility of faith becomes mani-
 "fest in its actuality, but it is in its actuality that it be-
 "comes manifest as a divine possibility. Can God be known?
 "Yes, God can be known, but God can only be known through Him-
 "self, through His revelation and through the awakening of faith
 "in His revelation, through His eternal Word, which has become

"flesh, and through His Holy Spirit, which brings hearts of stone
"to life. In two lumine videbimus lumen - in thy light we shall /^{tw}.
"see light. (102) That is the first and final word of Reformed
"teaching on the knowledge of God." (103)

(102) Psalm XXXVI. 9.

(103) K.G. 107-109.

III. B. 3. CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMAGO DEI.

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3. CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMAGO DEI.

1. Points on which Barth and Brunner agree.

We have seen that Brunner no less than Barth regards the imago dei in its original and complete sense to be man as he was in the beginning and will be again when he receives the divine redemption.

This corresponds to the *justitia originalis* of the Reformers. Both maintain that man's present nature is a fallen and corrupt one. "I teach, as Barth does, that the original image of God in man is "destroyed, that the *justitia originalis* is lost, and with it the "possibility of doing, or even of willing, what is good in God's "sight, that thus the freedom of the will is lost." (1)

Yet this man who "is a sinner through and through," (2) is also the crown of creation distinguished from all other creatures by the possession of reason and capable of knowing good and evil. That these qualities which distinguish man as a human being have a theological significance is the contention which separates Brunner from Barth. As we have seen, Brunner has explained and defended his views by means of a variety of concepts such as the material and formal imago, an analysis of the idea of personality and that of responsibility. Having given an exposition of his views on these we have now to submit them to a critical examination.

(1) N.u.G. 9-10.

(2) *ibid.* 11.

2. Brunner's distinction of the formal and material imagos.

The use of the terms "formal" and "material" has given rise to much misunderstanding for which Brunner must bear his share of blame. He defines the formal imago in abstract terms such as "das Humanum" "das Subjectsein des Menschen" "die Verantwortlichkeit" (3) "die Wortfähigkeit" (4) "die Ansprechbarkeit" (5) and "die Selbstbewusstheit." (5a) These, together with the assertion that the distinction between the formal and the material imagos is categorical, and that the material imago is totally lost (völlig verloren) (6), have given the impression that the formal imago is pure form without content, the empty frame to which the material imago supplies the content.

On the other hand it includes a certain (irgendwie) knowledge of the creation as God's handiwork (7) and of God's will and His law (8) which is also a knowledge of God Himself. (9) It includes the capacity to fulfil to some extent (einigermassen) the Creator's 'natural' order of marriage, (10) and a certain (irgendwie) knowledge of sin. (11) It is in fact all that "the natural man knows about "God and His Law and his own relation to God" ("Gottgehörigkeit").

This apparent failure on Brunner's part to carry through the

(3) *ibid.* 10.

(4) *ibid.* 11.

(5) *ibid.* 18.

(5a) *ibid.* 20.

(6) *ibid.* 11.

(7) *ibid.* 11.

(8) *ibid.* 12.

(9) *ibid.* 13.

(10) *ibid.* 17.

(11) *ibid.* 18.

absolute separation of form and matter is the point against which most of the criticisms of Brunner's views are directed. (12) Barth has no difficulty in showing that what Brunner calls the formal imago is something which has a rich content and that Brunner has found it impossible to maintain the distinction between form and matter. "With what right," asks Barth, "can Brunner assert that "a genuine knowledge of the true God, however incomplete (and what "knowledge of God is not incomplete?) is nevertheless not a saving "knowledge? And how can one, if in fact we know the true God from "the creation, even apart from Christ and also from the Holy Spirit, "- how can one say that the imago is, on its material side, 'utterly "'lost', that in what concerns the preaching of the Church the Scrip- "tures alone are judge, and that man is unable to do anything towards "his salvation. Must we not rather credit him with at least the "possibility of a preparation, at least a negative preparation for "the knowledge of God in Christ, at least a potentia oboedientialis "which despite sin belongs to him from the creation as - Catholic "theology has always done?" (13)

Against this Brunner protests that his use of the word 'formal' has been misunderstood. He never intended to limit it to pure form. Every form has, as a matter of course, its content. (14) "Formal" and "material" are relative ideas. What the ancients for instance

(12) see Nein! 19, 24, 26, 46-47, 55.

(13) *ibid.* 19.

(14) N.u.G. 49. s.

called 'formal freedom' is certainly something which has a great deal of content; but it is 'formal' in view of that with which they were then concerned: the power to be righteous in the sight of God. My concept of the formal Imago is formed on the analogy of this concept of formal freedom. (15) That a theologian should object to the term formal Imago because it turns out that it has a good deal of content he considers evidence that "to a very large extent this theological generation is deficient in that logical training which is necessary for the understanding of such a concept." (16) Accordingly in his latest book, from which these quotations come, he drops the terms 'formal' and 'material'.

In view of the many ways in which Brunner defined the contents of his formal imago, we must admit, I think, that the criticisms made against it were, so far at least as their 'form' was concerned, infelicitous. Whether this judgment extends to the 'content' of these criticisms is another matter. In acknowledging that his conception of a formal imago is one which has as its content all that distinguishes man as man, be he sinner or saint, believer or unbeliever, Brunner knows that he comes very near to the Catholic doctrine of a double imago. That Brunner's doctrine is indistinguishable from the Catholic one is, as we have already seen, the substance of Barth's whole polemic against him. It is also the criticism made, among others, by Edmund Schlink in *Der Mensch in der Verkündigung der*

(15) *Man in Revolt*. 513. quoted in future as M.i.R.

(16) *ibid.* 512.

Kirche, 185, and Carl Stange in a long essay on Natürliche Theologie in the Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie. 12. Jahrgang 1934/35. 370 ff.

"This distinction of a 'formal' and a 'material' image of God is - historically considered - a resumption of the medieval Catholic distinction between the two expressions used in the Old Testament narrative 'image' and 'likeness', imago and similitudo." (17) This holds good even though Brunner "in contradistinction to the Greek and Roman doctrine includes the liberum arbitrium in the lost material imago." (18)

Brunner's claim, of course, is that while his own doctrine comes near to the Catholic one it is quite distinct from it and a return to the true Reformed doctrine. "Whilst the old Lutheran dogmatic had in general the tendency to designate solely the justitia originalis - that is, what I call the material personality - as the imago Dei, and the Catholic theology on the contrary, gave that name only to man's reasonable nature as such - that is, what I call the formal personality, the old Reformed theology maintained in this respect a middle course by setting both in a necessary relation to each other. 'There is no absurdity in holding that he (man) is 'called the image of God in respect of the soul the image of 'God extends to everything in which the nature of man surpasses 'that of all other species of animals.'" (19) (19a)

(17) Stange. op. cit. 370.

(18) Schlögl. op. cit. 185.

(19) Calvin. Institutes. I. 15. 3.

(19a) N.u.G. 45.

Despite this, Brunner's doctrine does not find the support he claims for it in the Reformed theology. The very passage he quotes here from Calvin is seen to have a very different significance from that attributed to it by Brunner, for Calvin proceeds thus "Accordingly, by this term is denoted the integrity with which Adam "was endued when his intellect was clear, his affections subordinated "to reason, all his senses duly regulated, and when he truly ascribed "all his excellence to the admirable gifts of his Maker." (20)

Brunner acknowledges that the Catholic doctrine is clearer and less ambiguous than the Reformed which is only developed on the soteriological side. (21) The reason for this is not, as Brunner imagines, that the Reformers were less concerned about the significance of the doctrine of the imago for natural theology. The real distinction between the Reformed and Catholic theology at this point was, as Stange points out (22), that the Reformers understood the imago only from a purely soteriological standpoint. This is as true of Luther as it is of Calvin. "Johann Gerhard gives a specially apt "rendering of Luther's interpretation when he says that the image of "God is only present in the reborn man and that therefore it cannot "be perceived in the nature of the rational soul which is also the "possession of the man who has not been reborn." (23) Luther is

(20) *ibid.* (on this point see Hein! 45.)

(21) *N.u.G.* 32 ff.

(22) Stange. *op. cit.* 371.

(23) Johann Gerhard, *loci theol.* (Preuss) II, 112 b, 31: *Ergo in hominibus, nisi Spiritu Sancto renouentur, non est imago Dei 33. Ergo imago Dei non est definienda illis rebus, quae animae hominis etiam non renati sunt essentialia.*

even more drastic when he says "If these powers (memory, will and "understanding) should be the image of God, then it would follow "that the devil too, who indeed has such natural powers far stronger "than we have, would be created in the image of God." (24)

Brunner's attempt to distinguish his own doctrine from the Catholic one is hardly more successful. He claims, in common with the Reformers, to understand natural theology and the doctrine of the imago only from Christ (von Christus aus), whereas the Catholics hold that they can be fully understood by the natural reason. (25) But if the essence of the formal imago is that man is a reasonable creature, superior to the rest of creation by being endowed with intelligence and powers of speech, it is difficult to see why knowledge of this should be denied to all but those who have faith in Christ. "If the 'formal' image of God is man's rational nature, "then one must acknowledge that Catholic theology is right in claim- "ing that the 'formal' image of God is absolutely accessible to "rational knowledge and that the reference to the revelation in "Christ has then only the significance of a conventional arabesque." (26)

As a matter of fact the terms which Brunner uses to define the formal imago have nothing to do with the revelation in Christ. That man is a subject and responsible, has self-consciousness and a capacity for speech, are all qualities which require no revelation. The formal imago has thus a quite definite content accessible to the

(24) Stange. op. cit. 371. Luther. W.A. 42. 46.

(25) N.u.G. 32 f.

(26) Stange. op. cit. 372.

natural intelligence and Brunner's doctrine of the imago differs from the Catholic one only in unimportant details.

This is further confirmed by a consideration of Brunner's general definition of the formal imago as man's superiority to the rest of the creation. "It is", he says, "what distinguishes man, whether he is a sinner or not, from all the rest of creation It expresses above all man's pre-eminence within creation Man even as a sinner has not ceased to be the centre and climax of creation." (27) Here again we have a fact which can be established without revelation and no relation between God and man can be deduced from it except on the assumption that there is a direct continuity between them. But does man's superiority over the rest of creation really entitle us to call him the image of God? Man's superiority over the animals expresses itself in all the technical triumphs and cultural achievements of the human mind but these do not bring man one step nearer to God. The most impressive intellectual endowment and the most marked superiority over the animal creation may be accompanied by godlessness. Brunner only maintains a relationship between God and man by bringing it in to the argument in a quite unjustifiable way. Man's superior position in the entire creation rests on his special relation to God. This special relation to God rests on this "that God has created him for something special: to bear His image." (28)

(27) N.u.G. 10.

(28) *ibid.* 10.

But this special relation to God cannot be deduced from man's special relation to the rest of creation without committing the fallacy of *petitio principii*.

This is the inevitable outcome of trying to establish a doctrine of the *imago* from an analysis of what man is in himself and then bringing it into relation to the doctrine of salvation. It was no historical accident or want of interest which prevented the Reformers from developing the doctrine of the *imago* "on the side of natural theology." (29) They recognised, as Brunner has here failed to do, that the conception of the *imago Dei* has a purely theological significance and can only be a witness to the event in which God meets man with the gift of salvation. Where this takes place it is accompanied by the grateful acknowledgement that God has done all and that man has contributed nothing. Indeed, in every experience of salvation there is not only the recognition that this is solely the work of God but also acknowledgement that this has been wrought not with our co-operation but against our inner resistance. "Flacius" says Donald Mackenzie "declared that man was worse than a stock or stone because he offered resistance to God's Spirit. The will therefore does not co-operate; it opposes and resists. Everyone knows that this criticism, though infelicitously expressed, is in touch with reality and spoken out of personal experience. As regards regeneration, man is absolutely passive - he is spiritually dead; the image of God is not only wholly obliterated, but is

(29) *ibid.* 33.

"transformed into the image of Satan. Man thus contributes nothing positive to his own conversion; any contribution of his is negative and resisting." (30) Where the reality given in the actual event of God's coming to man in the experience of redemption is set aside and an inquiry is instituted into the possibilities which are to be found in man before the event, we have left the ground of Protestant theology and entered into that attempt to combine philosophy and theology which is characteristic of Catholic doctrine. However carefully the formal aspect of the imago may be defined, it is always rooted in an independent 'something' which is capable, positively or negatively, of entering into relations with God and forms the basis of the material imago. The material aspect may be given infinite significance and the formal in comparison regarded as infinitely small and unimportant, but small as it is, it is still a sufficient basis for "substantial portions of ethics." (31) The perversion begins when what Brunner designates as the formal imago becomes an independent object of theological interest. "The situation in which protestant theology reflects upon the relation of materia and forma is only that moment in which this relationship is actually established from the one side, not the moment before, when both entities are present, the one as the object of speculation, the other as object of psychological analysis." (32)

(30) Donald Mackenzie. Synergism. E.R.E. Vol. 12. 160.

(31) N.u.G. 28.

(32) Wilhelm Link. "Anknüpfung", "Vorverständnis" und Frage der "Theologischen Anthropologie". Theologische Rundschau. 1935. 210.

Link's discussion of Brunner's attempt to distinguish a formal and a material imago, (33) has proved very helpful here by making it clear that this can only be done by forsaking the legitimate task of theology and undertaking 'another task' that of reconciling theology and philosophy. "It has its origin," says Link, "not at the legitimate place of preaching, but on the soil of speculation." (34) As such, it is like the Catholic doctrine "undoubted Aristotelianism".(35) This is in agreement with the conclusions reached by Carl Stange after a careful study of Brunner's doctrine. "The distinction between 'formal' and 'material' is thus not applicable to the image of God By the application of philosophical categories to facts which are capable of being established in a purely philosophical way one doesn't come to theological knowledge. As we have already noted Brunner himself says incidentally: Man's superior position in the entire creation rests on the special relation of man to God. If he had followed up this thought in his doctrine of the image of God he might have won through to a theological interpretation of the imago. If the doctrine of the image of God is to be a theological statement it must take its point of departure not from man's superior position in creation but from his relation to God." (36)

In answer to this criticism Brunner abandoned the use of the offending terms 'formal' and 'material' while stoutly defending himself

(33) *ibid.* 207-217.

(34) *ibid.* 213.

(35) *ibid.* 211.

(36) Stange. *op. cit.* 381-2.

against the charge of maintaining the Catholic doctrine of the double imago. "In conclusion, a word about the relation between the view represented in this book and that in *Natur und Gnade*. "I maintain that what I stand for here and in that other work is exactly the same, but here I have tried to say it in different words I have now renounced the use of this expression 'formal Imago' First of all, in order to avoid giving further occasion for the misunderstanding - into which Schlink and others have already fallen - that I defend the Catholic doctrine of a double Imago (imago-similitudo) whereas I reject this doctrine as the fatal, basic error of all the Church's anthropology." (37)

As we have already seen in our exposition of Brunner's doctrine he now substitutes an analysis of the concept of responsibility for the two-fold division of the imago.

3. The Concept of Responsibility.

Responsibility, according to Brunner's teaching in *Natur und Gnade*, is one of the two characteristics of that humanity which distinguishes man from the rest of creation, and constitutes the formal imago. Since the terms formal and material were liable to be understood in a quantitative sense and had been severely criticised, Brunner now sets forth his views in an exposition of the concept of responsibility. The two-fold distinction has not been abandoned, only the terms have been changed. "Even now, on this side of the

"Fall, there is a humamum which distinguishes man from all other
 "creatures known to us. But this specifically human element is
 "not uncorrupted human nature, as is taught by the Roman Catholic
 "Church; nor is it merely a 'relic' of the original human nature,
 "as is represented by the Reformers. It is rather the whole of
 "human nature created in the image of God, but in a completely per-
 "verted form. The human element as form, as structure - namely,
 "as responsible being - has remained; the human element as content,
 "that is, as being in love, has been lost." (38) This content, as
 we saw in our exposition of Brunner's doctrine, he defines as 'true
 'responsibility'.

The nature of responsibility in the second or formal sense,
 i.e. of responsibility as man now knows it, can only be understood
 from the standpoint of Christian faith. "The first thing that must
 "be said of the Christian doctrine of man is that it is not a 'theory'
 "or a philosophumenon, but a statement of faith." (39)

This same truth is expressed throughout the book in a variety
 of forms and is Brunner's justification for claiming that his doctrine
 in no way infringes the Reformed doctrines of sola gratia and sola
 scriptura. "The work of God in which the being of the actual man
 "has its origin and its continued existence, is the word and work of
 "creation and preservation; but the ground of knowledge of this
 "first work is the second: the work and word of reconciliation and

(38) M.i.R. 169-70.

(39) *ibid.* 49.

"redemption, the historical Word of revelation which discloses Eternity." (40)

But in the natural man's knowledge of his responsibility there is a knowledge of God and of His will which constitutes the point of contact for the message of the Gospel. This is expressed more cautiously in 'Man in Revolt' than in 'Natur und Gnade', but it still constitutes the other pole of Brunner's teaching and that which distinguishes it from Barth's. "The fundamental idea of my book is this: that even the unbeliever is still related to God, and therefore that he is responsible, and that this responsibility is not put out of action even by the fullest emphasis upon the generous grace of God, but, on the contrary, that God requires it." (41) This responsibility carries with it an awareness of the Word of God in which it is grounded. "Human responsibility has no other ground than that of the Word of God, that is, that man in contrast to all other creatures, is not only borne by this Word of God, but is borne by Him in such a way that he is in some way or other aware of it. 'In some way or other' every human being is aware of his responsibility, just as every human being - to the extent in which he is really a human being - is responsible." (42)

Does the concept of responsibility really contain this knowledge in itself or is Brunner not investing it with a significance which it has only in, and for, faith?

(40) *ibid.* 78-9.

(41) *ibid.* 11.

(42) *ibid.* 73.

In holding that even the natural man is responsible, Brunner does not mean that man is, on that account, free to choose either good or evil, either to sin or enter the fellowship of love which is the divine purpose for his life. Our present knowledge of responsibility is that of something which we ought to do, but do not, in fact, do. "Although, through sin, we cease to express our responsibility, we do not cease to be responsible. We do not even cease to be aware of responsibility. Responsibility still remains the characteristic formula for the nature of man, for fallen man as well as for man in his origin. But responsibility is now no longer the formula of his reality, but only the formula of his obligation, and through this fact its meaning is profoundly changed. It is true that man does not love God and his neighbour, but himself; yet he ought to love God and his neighbour. The divine law of nature has become a law of obligation. Instead of an existence derived from, and lived in love, life has become the dualism of what is and what ought to be." (43)

But in this knowledge of responsibility there is no knowledge of God or of man's relation to God, which is accessible to us apart from faith. There is not even a sure knowledge of what we 'ought to be'. All that conscience gives, as Brunner elsewhere recognises, is a vague but unmistakable sense of uneasiness and disharmony. Man's ideas about what ought to be are conditioned by time, place and circumstances, and conscientious action may embrace a wide variety of

(43) *ibid.* 156.

divergent and even contradictory activities. Apart from the revelation of God and His will for us His children given in Scripture and the Word made flesh, we wander in darkness.

Responsibility is simply the expression of the relation of two wills to one another. It may be that of a child to a parent, or of an individual to the community. By abstraction it may come to be the expression of a disharmony in the individual between ideals and actuality. A sense of responsibility is the acknowledgment of a claim made upon one to which one feels under an obligation to respond. But it tells us nothing about the will from which that claim originates nor gives us any right to identify it with the Will of God. That must come from another source not accessible to the natural reason and conscience. "The efforts of philosophical ethics to acknowledge responsibility without reference to God show clearly that human reason "is certainly ready to acknowledge responsibility as an ethical fact "but that it does not hold it necessary to trace responsibility back "to God's Word to us (die Anrede Gottes)." (44)

Brunner has yet another line of argument by which he seeks to bring man's responsibility into relation to the personal will of God. Man is created not only through the Word of God but also in the Word and this constitutes the basis of his responsibility. The clearest expression of this point of view is in the article on "Kirche und "Offenbarung" in "Gott und Mensch" S.55 f. (45) This reappears in

(44) Stange. op. cit. 378.

(45) God and Man. 114 f.

more restrained form in "Mensch im Widerspruch" Ch.IV.6.1. S. 59 ff.(46)

"The Word of God is the ground of being of all created existence, not merely in the sense that all created being has its origin in the Word of God, but in the sense that in the Word 'all things cohere' (47), 'that all that God has created He upholds 'by the Word of His power.'(48)

"(49) 'This is true in a special way of the being of man'

"human existence is based upon a special relation to the Word of God. Man is man by the fact that he is a creature who stands in a special relation to the Word of God, a relation of being grounded in and upheld by the Word Just as the new man is generated by the Word of God, so also the original man in the divine original act of Creation was generated by the Word of God. But just as this generation in the Word of God includes the hearing of the Word and belief in the Word - and thus a spiritual relation to the Word of God - so also the original Creation includes such a process, which makes man not merely a product but a receiver of the Divine Word." (50)

After acknowledging that "Only from the knowledge of the revealed Word of God can both the nature of God and the nature of man be perceived" (51), Brunner continues "This actual, sinful man (that is, we ourselves, as we are) is to be understood in God and in God alone; this actual man has his continued existence and the ground of his being in the Word of God. Even in his perverted condition,

(46) Man in Revolt. 70 ff.

(47) Colossians 1, 17.

(48) Hebrews 1, 3.

(49) M.i.R. 71.

(50) ibid. 71-2.

(51) ibid. 72.

"even in his opposition to the Word of Creation, man can only be
 "understood as existing in the Word of Creation as that being which
 "not only has his existence - like all other creatures - in the Word,
 "but also as a being which, in his special relation to the Word, has
 "a special nature, that is, human nature.

"We will now express this - without waiting to develop it
 "further - by a conception which indicates this special relation to
 "the Word and the special form of being which is grounded in it,
 "namely: man is the being who is responsible. Human responsibility
 "has no other ground than that of the Word of God, that is, that man
 "in contrast to all other creatures, is not only borne by this Word
 "of God, but is borne by Him in such a way that he is in some way or
 "other aware of it. 'In some way or other' every human being is
 "aware of his responsibility, just as every human being - to the
 "extent in which he is really a human being - is responsible." (52)

Barth also, as Brunner notes in "Natur und Gnade" (53), knows
 that the Word which we hear in revelation is none other than that by
 which we are called into existence. "The Word which we hear in
 "revelation is none other than that by which we are
 "called into existence without which we would not be at all
 "..... The same Jesus Christ, through whom God binds us to Himself
 "while yet enemies, the same has already bound himself to us, as
 "those who belong to him, because he alone has called us out of

(52) *ibid.* 72-3.

(53) N.u.G. 14. 1.

nothingness, because he alone upholds us over nothingness. And by this our first bond with him, as it becomes manifest to us in the second and through the second, through his revelation, is "measured the meaning which this second bond must have for us." (54)

Barth agrees with Brunner that we are therefore responsible to God who has called us into existence and maintains us in it. But while Brunner asserts that man's knowledge of responsibility contains in itself a certain undefined knowledge of a relation to God and His Word, Barth holds that this is given in revelation alone. "What does that mean?" asks Barth, after making the statements quoted above, "It means that Jesus Christ the Word of God does not in his revelation require first of all to get the authority from somewhere or other, but he already has it antecedently in himself, authority to address us and claim us. It is not a question of whether we wish to vindicate ourselves to him: we are responsible to him, and our whole existence, one way or the other, is responsibility towards him. There is no possibility of us appealing against him or withdrawing to some domain of our own, where to begin with we once lived by ourselves, where he does not yet touch us at all or has ceased to do so, to a so-to-speak neutral human existence, where for a start it is left to us to submit or not to submit to the judgment and grace which he announces to us, from which we might treat with him at our ease. We are in fact aware of our human existence in no other way, than by the same Word which announces to us judgment and grace.

(54) Dogmatic I.1. 508-9.

"Thereby it tells us that it itself is the ground of our human existence: upon this ground we are men and not otherwise." (55)

In this I am sure that Barth is right. Once again Brunner is only able to deduce a relation to God from the knowledge of responsibility because he has already brought that knowledge into the terms used in the discussion. If we already know that there is a God and that this God has created man we can, of course, deduce from it an obligation on man's part and therefore a responsibility. Yet this is only true if we can regard the Creator as a personal being who enters into personal relations with the creature He has made. But from whence do we know that the Creator is such a personal being? The history of religious philosophy makes it clear that this is by no means a necessary and inevitable deduction from the mere fact of creation. Brunner evades this question by importing the idea of a personal God into his argument from the beginning. "The Word of God is the ground of being of all created existence." But the term 'Word' is not one which belongs by right to the sphere of natural theology. It implies a knowledge of God and His relation to the world He has created which cannot be deduced from the mere fact of creation. When Brunner equates man's knowledge of responsibility with the knowledge that man is borne by the Word of God he is already in the sphere of revelation.

The dialectic of the Law and the Gospel, which for Brunner expresses the same truth as his own doctrine of man's responsibility

(55) *ibid.* 509.

in its formal and material aspects, is dealt with elsewhere and need not be given a fresh treatment here.

Brunner's oft repeated aim throughout this controversy has been to establish that the natural man has in his distinctively human nature a knowledge of, or capacity for, God, which however perverted it may be is still sufficient to give man some knowledge of God's will for his life, to hold him in a relation to God and to serve as a point of contact for the Gospel. (56) But from the foregoing discussion it seems to me that Brunner fails to establish his claim. He only appears to do so by identifying experiences which have only a psychological similarity or by bringing into his argument ideas and terms which belong only to the sphere of revelation.

4. Barth's Problem.

Brunner's problem was how to maintain a fundamental, though qualified, continuity between God and man as the basis of revelation and yet hold to the Reformed doctrine of sola gratia and sola scriptura and avoid the Catholic doctrine of the analogia entis. Barth affirms, on the one hand, that there is an absolute discontinuity between God and man so that man in himself has neither knowledge of God nor yet the capacity to know Him and, on the other hand, that God reveals Himself to man. His problem is, therefore, that of showing how revelation is possible as a real revelation to man while maintaining the discontinuity between God and man.

(56) M.i.R. 514.

Barth agrees with Brunner that there is a point of contact for the Word of God. This does not exist, however, in man's present humanity. The fact that man is "ansprechbar" and "verantwortlich" does not constitute a point of contact. So far as capacity for receiving God's Word is concerned the imago Dei is destroyed. The natural man, apart from the grace of God, has no possibility of hearing and receiving the Word of God as God's Word. The true point of contact is one made by the Word for itself. It has no existence apart from faith. The creation of faith is the work of the Holy Spirit and this takes place when and where it pleases God to reveal Himself. Revelation is, therefore, as we have already seen, dependent on the divine predestination. This involves Barth in the further problem of showing how in a revelation which is dependent on predestination there is a true human experience in which man makes a personal and ethical response to God's grace. We have now to consider how the terms he uses to maintain this, self-determination, decision and faith, are compatible with that of predestination.

5. Self-determination and the divine determination.

We saw in our exposition of Barth's doctrine that knowledge of the Word of God is not possible without an experience of the Word of God. This is defined as the "factor determining the existence of the man who knows" which is "something external, distinct from himself." (57) This, as we have already seen, does not mean that

man is passive in experience, on the contrary he is active and self-determining. But it is not his self-determination which makes experience to be that of the Word of God. For that, it requires an overruling determination by God. At this important point we must set down Barth's own words. "The Word of God comes as a summons to him, and the hearing which he gives it is the right hearing of obedience or the wrong hearing of disobedience. Whether it is ultimately the one or the other, does not, of course, lie within his province. To that, the obedience or disobedience of his action, he cannot resolve and determine himself. Rather by his decision, by his resolution and self-determination, he stands in the secret judgment of the grace or the disfavour of God, to whom alone his obedience or disobedience is manifest. And that is the overlapping determination by God which befalls his self-determination. But that makes no difference to the fact that his hearing is self-determination, action, decision Were it not precisely human self-determination that is here indicated as, so to speak, the raw material, the subordinate, the thing in need, when we speak of the determination of human existence by the Word of God, how then would we speak of the determination of human existence and how at all of a determination by the Word of God? If the Word of God is not spoken to beasts, plants, or stones, but to men, and if determination by the Word of God is really a determination of human existence, of what else, then, should it consist save in this, that

the self-determination by which man is man receives in determination by God an Above which is absolutely superior to it, that as self-determination and without in the least being infringed upon or destroyed as such, it is given a direction, is put under a judgment, has a character stamped upon it, in short, is determined exactly as a self-determining being is determined by a word, and "as man in this case is determined by the Word of God. The fact that this befalls it and the nature of what thereby befalls it are not the work of man's self-determination. But conversely it is the work of man's self-determination which this befalls, to determine what may therewith befall it." (58)

Barth's aim here is unmistakably a double one, that of asserting and maintaining the divine sovereignty over men without thereby robbing man of his responsibility. Man is entirely determined by the Word of God - but it is man's own self-determination that is thus determined. Barth undoubtedly means by self-determination a human possibility, indeed that possibility which is constitutive of human existence, that "by which man is man." (59) While man cannot give himself the determination through the Word of God, his own self-determination is the "raw material, (das Material) the subordinate "(das Unterliegende) .. when we speak of the determination of human "existence by the Word of God." (60) This self-determination which

(58) *ibid.* 229-30.

(59) *ibid.* 230.

(60) *ibid.* 230.

exists before, and quite independent of, determination by the Word of God is connected with the consciousness of responsibility, it is action, decision. Thus Barth here is very near to Brunner who maintains that man's responsibility is the formal point of contact for the Word of God. For Barth, determination by the Word of God is a determination of man's existence. Since self-determination is the constitutive element in human existence it may be understood as that which makes knowledge of the Word of God possible. Since Barth emphatically rejects Brunner's doctrine it is rather difficult to understand just how the relation of these two, man's self-determination and the divine determination, is to be understood. Cullberg suggests that we are here dealing with a general philosophical theory of knowledge of the Kantian type. The following sentence of Barth's could serve as a fairly good summary of this Kantian theory of knowledge: "As the object of experience, i.e. determined by this external thing which so far has come in contact with him, and in the way in which it has made contact, and as the subject of experience, i.e. as one who now a second time comes in contact with a definite external thing in a definite manner, he is what he is, he exists as a man, and not otherwise." (61) (62)

Experience of the Word of God, like every other experience, presupposes a determination from without and a human self-determination, in this case the determination from without is acknowledged as a

(61) Dogmatic. I. 1. 226.

(62) J. Cullberg. Das Problem der Ethik in der dialektischen Theologie. 91.

determination by the Word of God. But this does not throw any light on the relation of these two determinations.

In the passage quoted above the supremacy of the divine determination is maintained by Barth in words which identify it with a divine predestination. "The Word of God comes as a summons to him, (the man who exists in his self-determination) and the hearing which he gives it is the right hearing of obedience or the wrong hearing of disobedience. Whether it is ultimately the one or the other, does not, of course, lie within his province. To that, the obedience or disobedience of his action, he cannot resolve and determine himself. Rather by his decision, by his resolution and self-determination, he stands in the secret judgment of the grace or disfavour of God, to whom alone his obedience or disobedience is manifest: And that is the overlapping determination by God which befalls his self-determination." (63)

6. Decision, divine and human.

This divine predestination is more clearly expressed in the concept of decision which is closely related to that of self-determination but has on the whole a more practical significance.

Decision is in itself ambiguous. It includes both the thought of God's decision with respect to man and man's decision in relation to God.

Decision in the first sense is related to Barth's conception

of the Word of God. God's Word is speech and that speech is action. This means that it has (1) "contingent contemporaneousness" i.e. it speaks direct to every age, (2) "power to rule", and (3) it is a decision. (64) Thus the divine Word is more than a mere event, it is a history in which God acts with sovereign power. "Decision means choice, freedom used. We should ill understand the Word of God without the unconditioned freedom in which it is spoken; but we should further understand it ill, were we to understand it as a mere possibility instead of as freedom used, as a decision made, as a choice taking place." (65)

This sovereign freedom of the Word of God has the following concrete significance. (1) The Word of God is not a reality in the same sense as that which can be ascribed to all else we call real. Its reality is not something which can be objectively determined "it is only real and to be regarded as real, if and when it gives itself and gives itself to be understood." (66) "It is a reality only by its own decision." (67) (2) As decision the Word of God in its relation to man always means a choice. "This choice is made when the Word is spoken and apprehended, a choice of grace unto faith and its righteousness or a choice of gracelessness to faithlessness and its sin." (68) That is to say that even where the Word is completely apprehended there may be a choice of gracelessness

(64) *ibid.* 162 ff.

(65) *ibid.* 179. cf. *Dogmatik*. I. 2. 749 ff., 787 f.

(66) *Dogmatic*. I. 1. 180.

(67) *ibid.* 181.

(68) *ibid.* 181.

or displeasure (Ungnade). Here we touch on the significance of the double predestination. As a divine decision God's sovereign election is justified in itself. (69) (3) This does not mean, however, that man's responsibility is suspended. "As the divine decision, the Word of God becomes operative on and in a decision of the man to whom it is spoken." (70) Because the Word is spoken to me it creates in me a new quality, namely, "the decision as to my faith or unbelief, my obedience or disobedience, i.e. the divine decision as to whether my act is faith or unbelief, obedience or disobedience, correct or incorrect hearing. This decision exists only over against the Word of God addressed to me, only as the answer to it." (71) Here it is desirable to set forth in full the terms in which Barth expresses this important point. The new situation into which the Word of God brings a man is not comparable with any other. It is "in fact a situation for decision. But not the decision (which of course also occurs!) of my varying resolution and choice, but the decision upon a varying process of being judged and adopted, and so - because the judging and adoption are the judging and adoption of God - upon a varying state of truth, upon a varying meaning in my resolution and choice. Because the Word of God means 'God with us', because it is the Word of the Lord, the Word of our Creator, Reconciler and Redeemer, it clearly pronounces our judgment upon ourselves. In it, it is decided, who

(69) *ibid.* 175-6.

(70) *ibid.* 182.

(71) *ibid.* 182-3. cf. 235-6.

"we are. We are what we are on the basis of this judgment, we are
 "what we are as hearers of it, i.e. we are believers or unbelievers,
 "obedient or disobedient. We are neither the one nor the other,
 "previously and per se. Previously and per se we have not the
 "slightest chance of being the one or the other. Faith and un-
 "belief, obedience and disobedience are only possible in that as
 "our action in the judgment of God they are the answer, one way or
 "the other, to His Word addressed to us. In faith and in obedience
 "my own resolution and choice are genuinely good before God, I exist,
 "whatever else may be said of me, according to the Word of God, I
 "have adopted and received His grace. In unbelief and disobedience
 "my own resolution and choice, whatever else may be said of them,
 "are genuinely bad before God. I exist in contradiction to the
 "Word of God, I have not adopted His grace. In one way or the other
 "it is I - so that it is my, my extremely responsible decision. But
 "it does not depend upon my decision for this character which it has,
 "for my choosing now the good, now the bad. But what this decision
 "of mine means, which I achieve with free will, is that in one case
 "its meaning is a step to the right, in another a step to the left,
 "that my choice one way is faith and obedience, while my choice
 "another way is a denial of both - this characteristic of my de-
 "cision is the truth, inherent in it, of the divine decision about
 "me." (72)

Barth's aim here is clearly the same as it was in what he said concerning self-determination and the divine determination. He desires to maintain God's sovereignty in election without thereby giving up man's responsibility. He certainly succeeds in the first of these aims. The divine sovereignty is asserted in the form of a double predestination. God chooses this man, and rejects that, according to His own free will. Is there room left in this for the exercise of man's responsibility in any real sense? At first sight it might seem that this might be maintained here as it was in the idea of self-determination. Man's responsible decision is the material on which the divine decision works, just as man's self-determination is the raw material of the divine determination. "That" is the overlapping determination by God which befalls his self-determination. But that makes no difference to the fact that his "hearing is self-determination, action, decision." (73) Here the two terms "self-determination" and "decision" are treated as equivalent expressions. But these two terms though they have much in common have one distinguishing difference which must not be overlooked since it is of crucial importance here. Self-determination as we saw can be regarded as "the raw material, the subordinate" element in the divine determination. It is that which provides the basis for the divine determination whereby it "has a character stamped upon it." But man's decision is not something of that a priori nature. It is only created in the act of the divine

(73) *ibid.* 229.

decision upon man's life. Nor does this divine decision mean that man is thereby set free to decide for or against God's Word. In the very act by which he receives the possibility of decision a definite decision has been made concerning him, stamping him as believer or unbeliever, obedient or disobedient. "Thus I am altogether the man I am in virtue of God's decision It is always "the act of the unsearchable judgment of God." (74) In this and in an earlier passage which declares that a man cannot resolve or determine himself whether his action is obedience or disobedience - "Rather by his decision, by his resolution, and self-determination, "he stands in the secret judgment of the grace or disfavour of God, "to whom alone his obedience or disobedience is manifest," (75) - we see that Barth is working with the idea of a secret, divine predestination which stands over man's life. This is something different from the wholesome reminder that God's judgments are not to be measured by our own, such as we have in Isaiah, "For my thoughts "are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher "than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts," (76) and in our Lord's parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. (77) There we are reminded of the heights and depths of the wisdom of God in order that we may learn from Him. But if, as the above passages from Barth

(74) *ibid.* 184.

(75) *ibid.* 229.

(76) Isaiah lv, 8-9.

(77) Luke xviii, 9-14.

expressly state, the divine judgment over our lives is such that we cannot know whether we stand in the grace or disfavour of God, are obedient or disobedient, then the whole basis of morality is undermined and all talk about a 'responsible decision' is a mere play upon words. (78)

7. The Nature of faith.

The third circle of ideas in which Barth seeks to show how revelation is possible despite the discontinuity between God and man, is that of faith.

In his analysis of faith, as we saw in our exposition, Barth has performed a valuable service in showing so powerfully how Christian faith has its origin and its continued existence not in any capacity which man possesses but in Jesus Christ its object.

A closer more critical examination of Barth's teaching concerning the nature of the relation of faith to the Word of God raises doubts about its validity. Here he is faced with the same problem as we met in our discussion of his use of the terms self-determination and decision, and finds the same, apparently insuperable, difficulties.

Before going on to submit his ideas to a critical examination it seems desirable to recapitulate what we have already said about faith and to do this with the coming discussion in mind.

The Word of God can be received and acknowledged in faith because it is speech addressed to man. The nature of this Word is

(78) See Appendix II on Predestination.

expounded by Barth in a series of nine definitions into which we need not now enter. (79)

The question which concerns us here is how this Word of God can be received or experienced, and since experience of the Word can only take place in faith, our question may be rendered: "What is the significance of faith as experience of the Word of God?"

Before coming to faith itself we may note it is taken for granted that it is possible for men to hear the Word of God. "Were it not so, then the entire conception of the Word of God would have to be emphatically designated a product of imagination, and Church proclamation together with dogmatics an objectless and therefore meaningless business and the Church a place of self-deceptions." (80) Knowledge of the Word of God is unlike that of any other object and its peculiar nature Barth expresses in the concept of acknowledgment. "Knowledge of it (the Word of God) by men can consist only in acknowledgment of it, and this acknowledgment can only become real through the Word itself, and can only become comprehensible if we start with itself." (81) This acknowledgment, where it takes place, is the miracle of faith (82) which is thus defined: "Faith ... is what takes place in real knowledge of the Word of God and makes this knowledge possible." (83) This faith is a human experience: "Let us hold on to the fact that faith is experience, a concretely fixable temporal

(79) Dogmatic I. 1. 141-212.

(80) *ibid.* 214.

(81) *ibid.* 213.

(82) *ibid.* 238, 254.

(83) *ibid.* 261.

"act of this man's or that, the act, in short of acknowledgment." (84)
 That it is real experience is not due to any quality or intensity or perfection which it possesses as a human experience but simply and solely to the Word itself. "It is the Word, it is Christ, to whom faith is related, because He gives Himself as object to it, who makes faith into faith, into real experience." (85)

Thus faith is a human possibility but not a possibility which belongs to man in himself. It is one which comes to him from God, not as an endowment, which, having once received, he can now exercise for himself, but as a loan given only in and for use. In this faith there takes place "a conformity of man with God, i.e. an adaption of man to the Word of God." (86) "In faith man is conform with God, i.e. capable of apprehending the Word of God, capable in his own decision of so corresponding with God's decision made about him in the Word, that the Word of God is now the Word heard by him, he himself is now the man addressed by this Word." (87) This is the true 'point of contact' between God and man not, as Brunner holds, the humanity and personality remaining over to sinful man from the creation but a new-created rectitudo which only truly exists in faith. The existence of this 'point of contact' is not demonstrable by any analysis of the consciousness of faith. This in itself is "an 'empty space' which also might be filled in quite another way

(84) *ibid.* 263.

(85) *ibid.* 263.

(86) *ibid.* 273.

(87) *ibid.* 275.

"than actually by the Word of God." (88) That it is more than this is the miracle of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit which is the true subjective side in the event of revelation. (89) "Man needs revelation, as surely as he is lost without it. He thus requires that revelation should become manifest to him, i.e. that he should become open to revelation. But that is not a thing within the power of man. It can only be God's own reality if it does happen, and it is therefore a thing only in God's power, that it can happen. It is God's reality, by God being subjectively present to men not only from without, not only from above, but also from within, from beneath. It is reality, therefore, by God not only coming to man, but meeting Himself from man's end. God's freedom to be thus present to man and hence to introduce this meeting - that is the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit in God's revelation." (90) Thus faith, knowledge and obedience exist for man in the Holy Spirit." (91)

All this, however, is only to be understood as something future. "Everything that is to be said about the man who receives the Holy Spirit ... is in the N.T. sense an eschatological pronouncement related to the ἐσχατον, i.e. to what from our point of view is still in arrears for our experience and thought, to the eternal reality of the divine fulfilment and completion." (92)

(88) *ibid.* 278.

(89) *ibid.* 515.

(90) *ibid.* 516.

(91) *ibid.* 519.

(92) *ibid.* 530-31.

To sum up. Man is a believer as he is determined absolutely and entirely by the object of faith. He indeed acts when he believes "but the fact that he believes by acting is God's act. Man "is the subject of faith. It is not God but man who believes. "But the very fact of a man thus being subject in faith is bracketed as the predicate of the subject, God, bracketed exactly as the "Creator embraces His creature, the merciful God sinful man, i.e. "so that there is no departure from man's being a subject, and this "very thing, the Ego of man as such, is still only derivable from "the Thou of the subject, God." (93) Thus the question about how the Word of God is known to man may be simply stated in one short sentence. "The Word of God becomes knowable by making itself "knowable." (94)

In all this Barth's aim and intention is clear and unmistakable. He desires to base faith on God, i.e. on the Word of God, and that alone, but in such a way as not to infringe on man's responsibility. Faith is to be regarded, on the one hand, as entirely the work of God, on the other, as man's responsible act and experience. Is he really successful in doing so or does the one not swallow up the other?

This may be considered from different points of view.

(93) *ibid.* 281.

(94) *ibid.* 282.

1. Is faith as Barth conceives it a genuine human experience?

Barth claims, of course, that experience of the Word of God is a genuine human experience. It can be psychologically described as feeling or conscience or religious consciousness, whilst at least eight of the points by which the concept of acknowledgment was defined were also to be understood psychologically. He has no objections, he says, if these points "are conceived and designated simply and straightforwardly as an attempt to describe - in this case formally - Christian religious experience or consciousness." (95) He emphasises this "because to my regret I am continually having it said that my occupation is to put revelation and faith from the believer's standpoint up in the clouds, to teach a fides quae creditur without considering the fides qua creditur, the intimate personal conviction and experience of faith." (96)

On the other hand he constantly emphasises the fact that this faith which can be psychologically established is not the real faith, i.e. the expression of a real meeting between God and man. This he holds for two reasons.

a. The experience of faith is not real faith because "anything that can be seen, grasped and analysed from beneath as human experience and action, as consciousness of faith,..... is in itself an 'empty space' which also might be filled in quite another way than actually by the Word of God." (97) Here we touch on one of

(95) *ibid.* 238.

(96) *ibid.* 239.

(97) *ibid.* 278.

the weaknesses of Barth's polemic against those, in modern Protestantism, who consider religious experience as the true source of all theology. (98) He accuses them of separating experience from the Word of God and making the latter subordinate to the former and, therefore, ending up by losing the Word of God in the word of man. (99) But Barth here makes the same separation in order to protect the Word of God from dissolution in the word of man and he makes the separation far more radically than any of his opponents. For the "consciousness of faith" he here describes as "empty space" and "human darkness" is an abstraction, an experience without an object, "which also might be filled in quite another way than "actually by the Word of God." But experience is always experience of something and it is the object of experience which gives it its distinctive character. Experience of God is something sui generis which is both real as human experience and explicable only from its object. That as human experience it is never pure and perfect and is always liable to be confused with other experiences psychologically similar cannot be denied. This can only be avoided by directing attention to the object. This is, of course, the core of Barth's teaching on this point. Here, however, he goes beyond that and makes a separation between the content or object of faith and the human experience. But this can only be done in abstraction and it has no justification in reality.

(98) cf. General Introduction to the Library of Constructive Theology, published by Nisbet.

(99) Dogmatic. I. 1. 239 ff.

b. The same aim and interest is at work in Barth's emphasis on the eschatological aspect of faith. "Once again and over and over again, what has to be said here cannot be intended as the analysis of a present reality, for as such it is withdrawn from our grasp and our knowledge, but strictly only as a reminder of the promise and as a hope of fulfilment to come." (100) But since the promise and the fulfilment, which are the content of the reminder and the hope, belong to the divine sphere they cannot be psychological data of human experience. Once again we have an unreal separation of form and content.

2. The second question raised by Barth's view of faith is whether there is in it a real knowledge of the Word of God. Barth's endeavour is to maintain both, that in the act of faith there is knowledge of the Word of God and that, in the last resort, the subject of this knowledge is not man but God.

As we saw earlier the possibility of knowing the Word of God is the presupposition both of the Church and theology. Faith or acknowledgement includes a knowledge of the Word of God. "This must be so, because the Word of God is primarily and predominantly language, communication from person to person, from mind to mind, spirit, a rational event, the Word of truth, because it is directed to man's ratio." (101)

(100) *ibid.* 277.

(101) *ibid.* 234.

On the other hand this knowledge, of which man is the subject, is to be interpreted as an act of being acknowledged by God. (102) This can be expressed in such a way that, while the human character of the act is in no way diminished, its source, initiative and criterion are set in the object, the Word of God itself. "In the act of acknowledgment the life of the man, without ceasing to be the self-determining life of this man, has its centre, its direction, the meaning of this attitude it takes up, also the criterion as to whether this attitude really has the corresponding meaning - all this it has outside of itself, in the thing acknowledged." (103)

But this does not satisfy Barth. He now goes a step further and transposes the terms. "It is an act of pure acknowledgment ... which befalls the man on the far side of all his action and capacity, the subject of which is not himself, in the free truth and reality of which he must be acknowledged in order to acknowledge its truth and reality." (104) Here, as Cullberg remarks, "the knowledge of the Word of God is not really a 'human possibility'; its pre-supposition is the 'oneness of the divine Logos and the human in 'faith', a true Unis mystica which has nothing to do with human experience and knowledge in the usual sense." (105)

3. This brings us to a third question. How is it possible that in faith man is ... capable of apprehending the Word of God, capable

(102) *ibid.* 238.

(103) *ibid.* 237.

(104) *ibid.* 238.

(105) *Das Problem der Ethik.* 112.

"in his own decision of so corresponding with God's decision made about him in the Word, that the Word of God is now the Word heard by him, he himself is now the man addressed by this Word," while at the same time it is said that the Holy Spirit is the true subjective side of revelation and that it is only real "by God not only coming to man, but meeting Himself from man's end." (106) To express this Barth uses two conceptions. He uses a special metaphor, that of bracketing or embracing. As a subject brackets its predicate, or as the Creator embraces the creature, and the merciful God sinful man, so the subject God brackets man's being as subject. (107) Of itself the metaphor gives little help towards the understanding of Barth's thought at this critical point, since it gives no indication of the nature of the relationship between the two subjects thus bracketed. He comes nearer an explanation when he goes on to say that the subject man "the Ego of man as such" is wholly derived from the subject God. (108) This suggests, in opposition to Barth's repeated emphasis on the discontinuity between God and man, that there is a real continuity between them and leads us to the second concept in which this seems to be more clearly expressed. In faith there takes place "a conformity of man with God" "an adaption of man to the Word of God." (109) If this were not so, either man would no longer be the subject of faith or faith itself would not exist.

(106) Dogmatic. I. 1. 516.

(107) cf. Dogmatic. I. 1. 281.

(108) *ibid.* 281.

(109) *ibid.* 273.

There could be no hearing of the Word of God if there were no community between the speaking God and the hearing man, if there were no analogy, no likeness as well as all the unlikeness springing from the difference between God and man, no "point of contact" between the two.

All this is to be understood, however, in the light of what we have already learnt about Barth's understanding of self-determination, decision and faith. The "conformity with God" which takes place in faith is a new creation which has nothing to do with the humanity and personality of sinful man. It is only possible to hear the Word in faith. But when man hears the call of God the decision has already been made over him whether his hearing is faith or unbelief, obedience or disobedience. Thus man's faith is bracketed in the divine predestination and faith is understood as a conformity with God which comes from Himself.

Besides the consequences it entails for the thought of man's responsibility and the idea of sin, this doctrine has also grave consequences for our thought of God. By the suspension of the human self which is involved in the act of faith it cannot be conceived as a true personal relationship between God and man in which there is communion between a Thou and an I. This being so, there are two possible ways of thinking about God's relationship to man. We may think of God and man as existing together in the same universe as Creator and creature, Sovereign and subject, and under a variety

of other metaphors which express Almightyness of God and His sovereign power and the utter subordination of man. We can still speak of belief in God but here faith means little more than the conviction that we are subject to the inscrutable decrees of a Sovereign Lord. Whether His attitude towards us is one of goodwill or displeasure we cannot know for certain. On the other hand we can think of God as the eternal "I" who is the only abiding reality in a transient and changeful universe. Here too we can speak of faith in God under the presupposition that my being can be "adapted" to the Being of God, i.e. raised to the divine sphere and "conformed to God." Such a thought does not lie only in "the threatening proximity of the "analogia entis, mysticism and the philosophy of identity" (110), it is actually within their sphere. That Barth's thought fluctuates between those two modes of apprehending God and His relation to man is the result of his denial of a true personal communion between God and man. (111)

8. Conclusion.

It cannot be said that the present controversy between Barth and Brunner has produced a satisfactory solution to this age-long problem. It may even be doubted whether any real progress has been made towards a solution. (112) Nevertheless the question has been

(110) *ibid.* 277.

(111) cf. Cullberg. "Das Problem der Ethik in der dialektischen Theologie". 115 ff. and "Das Du und die Wirklichkeit". 51 ff. and 220 ff., two studies I have found most helpful.

(112) Johannes Wendland. "Die Lehre vom Ebenbilde Gottes und von der religiösen Anlage in der neueren Theologie." *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*. 1936. 81.

debated with freshness and intensity and it may be claimed that, when the dust of conflict has died down, it will be found that the problem has been clarified in certain respects and some indication given of the line along which further progress may be made. I shall endeavour in these closing paragraphs to summarise what I have learnt from both Barth and Brunner.

Despite the wealth of erudition and the subtlety of argument with which Brunner defends his thesis that the imago Dei is still a present reality, I do not think he has been successful. This is true not only of the earlier distinction between the formal imago and the material imago, but also of the later attempt to find the imago in man's "Gesetzlichkeitsstruktur".

The imago is no independent 'something' man possesses in consequence of his divine creation which, despite his sin, still functions as the point of contact for the redeeming Word of God. Where sin is taken seriously there can be no attempt to separate creation and sin. The only knowledge we have of the natural man is a knowledge of sin. Thus faith is not the fulfilment of a possibility latent in man.

I agree with Barth in his emphasis on the purely theological nature of the imago. It is in the truest sense an image, a reflection of God, and exists only in relation to Him. We do not in any sense possess it of ourselves. It exists only in faith and we can neither prepare ourselves for faith nor receive it, nor keep it.

Faith is the gift of God and lives only in utter and constant dependence on its object. This also accounts for the fact that the Reformers were only interested in the imago Dei from the point of view of soteriology. The imago only exists where God draws near to man in saving grace re-creating man in His own image.

On the other hand it is man who is re-created in the image of God and the miracle of grace which then takes place is quite other than the miracle of creation in which something absolutely new is produced. In the experience of salvation man is conscious that in some way he is 'coming to himself', though it may be a 'self' which he has not hitherto known. The new man and the old are not entirely unrelated.

At this point I feel that Barth's position is unsatisfactory and untenable. In his eagerness to avoid the danger of making human religious experience and effort the forerunner of faith, the pitfall into which Aquinas has fallen with his harmonious system of natural and supernatural theology, Barth asserts the discontinuity of 'nature' and 'grace'. He does not deny that there must exist something in common between God and man, which makes it possible for man to receive the Word. Yet, as we have seen, he so defines this that the discontinuity is maintained and no real relationship between God and man exists. The result is that the problems raised by that urge to seek truth, beauty, goodness and holiness which finds expression in science and philosophy, in art and in religion are never really faced by Barth.

Brunner's solution is that there are two revelations, a general and a special, and that man as such is always one who is living in the sphere of the general revelation. Man's humanity, his essential being as man, is identical with this relation to God. Thus all men have some knowledge of God and this imperfect knowledge, which finds expression especially in religion and morality, forms the point of contact for the saving knowledge given in the divine self-revelation in Christ.

There is a large measure of truth in this contention. Modern psychology has taught us to look on human nature not as a static endowment of qualities bestowed on man in the beginning, but rather as a dynamic organism in a state, not of being, but of becoming. On his first visit to Rome Goethe found the city stimulating and unsettling in an uncommon degree. "Day by day", he wrote to a friend, "I am casting off another and still another husk, but I hope to come home to you a man." In the experience of salvation, as we have already noted, a man is conscious not of acquiring an entirely new self, but of leaving behind an imperfect self and really coming to his true self. There is in the experience not only a break with the past but also some measure of continuity. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to contend that man's humanity is constituted by the knowledge of God which is mediated to us by the society in which we are reared.

This demands the assumption that all men have some knowledge of God, and are conscious, however dimly and pervertedly, of the

pressure of God's Spirit upon their own. They misunderstand and misinterpret their experience and require to have its true significance made known to them. Such is Brunner's contention. I have already argued, in dealing with Brunner's doctrine, that the knowledge of God which is ours in the experience of faith is something qualitatively different from that which man has in a sense of responsibility or in idolatry. While they are experienced through common psychological channels they are so separated that there is no passage, no continuity, from the one to the other. Brunner is not entirely unaware of this, acknowledging that the point of contact is, at the same time, "the point of supreme contradiction." (113) Nevertheless it is the idea of an underlying continuity which is the dominant feature in Brunner's thought at this point. Because of this he does less than justice to the New Testament conception of salvation as a passage from death to life. It is this which is the core of Barth's doctrine. Man is spiritually dead and can do nothing to prepare himself for faith, or to lay hold on it when it is offered to him, or to keep it when once it has been given. Despite this, however, the fact remains that man is incurably religious and that even where spiritual death is undeniable and not even a hint of any spiritual interest, however perverted, remains, man is still the creature whom God seeks and for whom Christ died.

Dead as he is, he is one who is capable of being restored to life. This has been well said by Kraemer. "In Biblical realism God is presented as deeply and strenuously concerned about man and the world. So deeply and so strenuously, so movingly humane is this concern, that in all ages all dignified philosophical and religious thinking has been shocked by the passionate anthropomorphism of prophetic Biblical religion; and has always tried to mitigate and normalize it by a decent scheme of an immutable divine essence, arrayed with exalted divine attributes. God's deep and strenuous concern goes to the length of the Incarnation. If there is any meaning in it, it means that God wants, even passionately wants, contact with man, and thus through the act of His revelation shows His belief in the possibility of contact. Stronger argument than this for the existence of the point of contact in man there cannot be. The apostolic nature of God's revelation in Christ pre-supposes it. No human reasoning can wipe this out, unless it wants to make the Gospel void and meaningless." (114)

How are we to maintain, on the one hand, the sole efficacy of the grace of God in salvation and, on the other, the truth that it is really received by man? In other words how are we to maintain that the imago Dei is 'a new creation' which is God's gift in His self-revelation and also that it is we who are re-created in

(114) H. Kraemer. The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World. 131.

the sense of being awakened from death to life, and restored to that image in which we were created?

One negative gain emerges from the controversy. This may be stated in Brunner's own words. "A false anthropology has defined this relation between God and man in such a manner that it inevitably leads to insoluble dilemmas, and, what is worse, to a false conception of faith itself. The relation between God and man was, namely, conceived causally. This meant that there was nothing for it but either to seek causality purely upon the side of God and to make man into a truncus seu lapis; or to distribute causality between them both, although in unequal proportions, which endangered the truth of the sole power of the grace of God." (115)

Both Barth and Brunner have endeavoured to escape from this and sought to express the nature of the relation of God and man in such a way as to maintain both the dominant reality of grace and the subordinate reality of freedom. Neither, as we have seen, quite succeeds in this but their efforts indicate that a solution is most likely to be found in a truer understanding of the nature of personal relationships. Both have been influenced, though in different degrees, by the work done in recent years in this field, of which Cullberg gives a critical survey in his book, *Das Du und die Wirklichkeit*. In the relationship of human individuals to

one another there emerges a pervasive element which overcomes the isolation in which they stand. This appears to be even more true of the relationship between God and man. Where God draws near to man in grace He does so not as a remote Being impinging on man's independent nature, but rather as a pervasive Spirit which so enters into relations with man that, without diminishing in any degree man's self-identity, He not only calls man to Himself but also quickens the response in the soul of man. Thus conceived the imago has no existence apart from God, lives only in Him, and is yet the image of the divine in the very life of man. Much work will still require to be done in order to clarify this point of view.

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III. C. THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

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III. C. THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

A. BRUNNER'S DOCTRINE OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

1. What Brunner means by the Law.

a. Difficulty of giving a clear answer.

Brunner considers Barth's reversal of the traditional order "the Law and the Gospel" is due to a misunderstanding of the Reformers' teaching about the Law. Any discussion with Barth, therefore, which does not clarify this is likely to miss the point entirely because the same words are being used with quite a different meaning. "Luther means something fundamentally different from Karl Barth, when he speaks of the "Law", and his whole doctrine will only become intelligible to one who knows what Luther meant by the "Law" "(1). When Luther speaks of the Law, he, in agreement with St. Paul, means "something with which the Christian, as a believer, has no further connection, of which, from the standpoint of the Gospel, one can only speak in antithesis - without on that account becoming an *ἀνομος* "(2). Barth knows of this law but passes it by as of little account. Yet it is about this law that St. Paul writes in the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians and it is round this law and its dialectical relation to the Gospel that Luther's whole theological thought turns. It occupies a similar place in Brunner's thought. (3). It is important, therefore, that we should understand clearly what Brunner means when he speaks of the Law. Unfortunately, this is not a sphere in which great clarity is possible. "It is quite impossible to sum up "the Law of God" in one single definition Even the

(1) Brunner. Man in Revolt. 517.

(2) ibid. 517.

(3) ibid. 514-516.

Reformers, who took endless pains to try to clarify this central conception, only succeeded in formulating a doctrine which, at this point in particular, betrays a certain confusion of thought and remarkable uncertainty." (4). "This law is not a plain and simple "entity, but, in the most rigid sense of the word, it is ambiguous." (5). This being so, the only course open to us is to follow Brunner in the various descriptions he gives of the Law. These may be set down under three headings, the first two dealing with the objective and subjective aspects of the Law, (respectively) the third with Brunner's interpretations.

b. The objective aspect of the Law.

The life of man in this world is not that of a free, unrelated individual. From the beginning it is a life 'ordered' in all kinds of ways and thus maintained in organic relation to his family or nation, and to humanity as a whole. The "manifold unconscious "forms of life" by which this is accomplished Brunner calls "orders". These he divides into four classes ranging from those which are "carried into effect automatically by the bodily organism", through habits acquired in infancy, and social customs, in which communal experience is handed on, to the laws and rules of life through which the collective community maintains itself. "We describe the sum-total of all these forms of connexion between human beings, in so far

(4) The Divine Imperative 143-144

(5) Man in Revolt 519

"as they are also - on the one hand - subject to the control of the
 "will, and - on the other - primarily simply effective as present
 "forces for the maintenance of order, by an artificial word: Lex."(6)
 This Lex is a necessity without which human life, which means above
 all life in community, would be impossible. It forms, too, the
 framework for all the more refined and spiritual forms of life which
 are obedient to God.

The Law has not come into existence merely because men have
 found it necessary "It is rather itself a possibility of life which
 "is given by God It forms part of the way in which God, at
 "present, preserves life in the created order tainted by sin, it is
 "His way of giving us life, and especially life with one another."(7)
 The Law is not identical with the will of God which can never be
 expressed in a law. But God's will for our lives cannot be known
 and obeyed unless we also "take into account the Lex as the expres-
 "sion, indirectly, of the Will of God, as the 'framework' which God
 "has set for our life, for a life in love." (8) To this Law belong
 also the Commandments of the Bible in so far as they are understood
 as law. (9)

c. The subjective aspect of the Law.

Man, as we have seen, is a being made by God and for God.
 His true life is to live a life of love towards God and his fellow-men

(6) The Divine Imperative. 141.

(7) *ibid.* 142.

(8) *ibid.* 143.

(9) *cf.* Natur und Gnade. 17 f.

in response to the love of God. This is the law of his being. Sin is the practical and actual denial of this, it is man's refusal to respond to God's seeking love.

Yet man cannot annihilate the stamp God has set upon his nature at the Creation. He may cease to respond to God but he does not cease to be responsible. He does not even cease to be aware of responsibility. "But responsibility is now no longer the formula of his reality, "but only the formula of his obligation, and through this fact its "meaning is profoundly changed. It is true that man does not love "God and his neighbour, but himself; yet he ought to love God and his "neighbour. The divine law of nature has become a law of obligation. "Instead of an existence derived from, and lived in love, life has "become the dualism of what is and what ought to be. It is this law "of obligation which Paul means when he speaks of the 'law'." (10)

Man becomes aware of this through the functioning of his conscience. This is neither the 'Voice of God' of popular natural theology nor the consciousness of the Moral Law, nor the judgment of the intellect concerning the agreement or non-agreement of an action with the law, but "a kind of knowledge, a perception of our existence "as a whole, a sense of unrest, a signal of alarm, which announces a "disturbance of order." (11) "Conscience makes its presence felt on certain occasions of actual wrong-doing or of failure; but as soon as it makes its voice heard it announces more than this particular instance

(10) Man in Revolt. 156.

(11) The Divine Imperative. 156.

of wrong-doing or failure. It proclaims this fault as an outbreak of the contradiction as a whole, as a manifestation of "general disorder". It is in this primary sense of "conscience" - the so-called "bad" or accusing conscience - that man first experiences his responsibility." (12)

Conscience thus bears witness to the fundamental law of our being - our responsibility to God. This is held up to us as something which was once a possibility for us but is now lost. It does not make any change in our being or our situation but merely lays bare the position in which we stand. Therefore the knowledge of the Law as such is one which man can have from himself. The Law is written in his heart. (13) It is a Law which is placed in our hearts from the Creation and cannot be lost. Brunner expresses this even more clearly, by saying that man's being has a legalistic structure. (Gesetzlichkeitsstruktur).

This natural law written in the heart by God at the Creation is the basis of all morality, whatever outward form it may take. "It is what we may describe as a moral norm. For it is not in the content of the law that there is the difference between the Bible and heathenism or the natural man; rather what the law of nature teaches is precisely what also the Bible of the Old and New Testament teaches: the love of God and of one's neighbour Although this natural law written in the heart may be 'dimmer' than that which

(12) *ibid.* 156-7.

(13) *Man in Revolt.* 518.
Wahrheit als Begegnung. 70.
Natur und Gnade. IV.

"is revealed in the Scriptures, yet here there is no difference in principle The natural law is even the criterion for that which is valid in the Old Testament doctrine of the Law." (14)

d. Two Interpretations.

Along with these expositions we may take two interpretations which help us to understand what Brunner means when he speaks of the Law.

1. The Law is that Word of God which tells us that we are sinners.

When God's Word comes to us as we now are it tells us that we are sinners, that is to say, that we are living in opposition to the divine intention for our lives, having denied the dependence on God in which we were created and, in asserting our independence, lost our fellowship with God. Thus as sinners we live not in fellowship with God, nor yet free from Him, but under His wrath. God's Word shows us our true situation. "The Word of God so far as it does this is what Paul calls 'the Law'. We are measured by the norm of our being which corresponds to the creation, by that which we ought to be according to the Creator's intention, and the result of this measurement is: We have missed our destiny, perverted our being, and thereby lost the life which was given to us with that destiny. 'By the Law' is the knowledge of sin.' Likewise 'The Law works wrath'. Both mean, the opposition between God's Will and our being is revealed to us." (15)

(14) Man in Revolt. 520.

(15) Wahrheit als Begegnung. 69.

This Law is not in the truest sense God's Word. God meets us in it but not God Himself. It "is not God's opus proprium but "His opus alienum, just as the wrath of God shows us not the true "face of God but the face of God altered by our sin." (16) Everything that produces this result is to be reckoned as the Law. "That "which kills is according to its office, law." (17) Even the Gospel itself may thus be reckoned as the Law. This Law plays a necessary part in the process of salvation and has more than a merely negative value. "It is and remains the divine factor in the lost situation "of the sinner." (18)

2. The Law is the fundamental principle of the natural self-understanding of man. (19)

This can be seen when we consider what happens when man hears the command to love. This is a commandment which is known, in some way or other, outside the sphere of the Biblical revelation. But where it is heard not as the Gospel but as the Law attention is directed to that which has to be done instead of to the One who commands. "The legalistic understanding of the Will of God makes "us, that is to say, independent of God in a false way, a way which "corresponds to sin. It awakens in us, not by accident but of "necessity, the illusion that we could do God's Will of ourselves, "if only we willed it. It misleads us into self-righteousness and "self-glorification." (20) The fulfilment of the commandment is thus

(16) Man in Revolt. 520. cf. Wahrheit als Begegnung. 70.

(17) *ibid.* 523.

(18) *ibid.* 519.

(19) *ibid.* 518.

(20) Wahrheit als Begegnung. 70.

considered to be something we are called on to do in our own strength as the way to right existence and a right relation to God and man. Thus the Law is understood as an abstract and impersonal element which comes between God and man, man and man. "The final motive therefore in legal morality is self-respect; responsibility to God and to one's neighbour has been distorted into the self-responsibility of the rational self towards itself." (21) Thus the Law which in reality is the witness to God's claim upon man comes to be interpreted as the Law of his nature. This legalistic understanding of man and the religion based on it is, as Luther recognised, the common characteristic of all forms of religion other than genuine Christianity. But "this legalistic understanding of man is, in its deepest sense, self-deification, since it seeks in man that which can only be found in God: the truly human possibility of life." (22) It is the very essence of man's sin. "The legalistic understanding of God and our relation to Him is as false as sin itself; indeed legality is in the truest sense the centre of sin." (23)

2. The Functions of the Law.

Further light on Brunner's doctrine of the Law is to be gained from what he has to say about the functions of the Law. These he considers under a three-fold division of respectable antiquity, the *usus politicus*, the *usus elenchticus* and the *usus didacticus*. (24)

(21) *Man in Revolt*. 158.

(22) *ibid.* 169.

(23) *Wahrheit als Begegnung*. 70.

(24) cf. *The Formula of Concord*. Article VI.

Schaff. *The Creeds of Christendom*. Vol. III. 130-131.

a. The usus politicus legis.

Life, and in particular life in a community, is impossible apart from law of some kind. It forms the necessary framework within which the higher life may be developed. It is therefore a characteristic of every human society. As such it is the gift of God and while it is not directly identical with the Will of God it is to be accepted gratefully and obeyed willingly. "In spite of the element of compulsion which it contains, the Lex forms part of the way in which God, at present, preserves life in the order tainted by sin, it is His way of giving us life, and especially life with one another. God commands us to obey this rude, coercive, arbitrary, external authority, and, indeed, to accept it thankfully from His Hands, and to obey it willingly." (25)

Since the Law is only the indirect expression of the Will of God, we owe it a limited, and not a final obedience. The last word is reserved by God for Himself. When, in faith, we hear the Divine Command, we break through the Law under which our life here is lived by having its ultimate meaning revealed to us. "Just as the bud breaks through its sheath, so the believing obedience of love must break through the law from within. The law, both in the sense of 'laws which stand written', and in the sense of the law which is written on our conscience, is the husk within which God means the fruit of faith to ripen. But, as we have already seen, when the fruit is ripe, the outer covering must be actually broken." (26)

(25) The Divine Imperative. 142.

(26) *ibid.* 143.

b. The usus elencticus legis.

The essence of the Law is summed up in the great commandment "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." (27) In this commandment we see most clearly what the ultimate meaning of the Law is, viz. that "in all law the one thing that matters is that God claims me for Himself: God alone - claims me wholly. He does not merely wish to have my outward acts, but He wants my heart - as one which is obedient to Him; for when He possesses my heart He also possesses my outward actions." (28) Thus understood the Law inevitably becomes our judge. We do not love God with a single, obedient heart, and such obedience as we do give to His laws is less an obedience to Him than to a standard we have accepted for ourselves. To realise this is to know that we are trying to satisfy God through the keeping of the Law. Our sin is thus laid bare and "the Law worketh wrath." (29) The result of this is despair and the confession "I can do no more." "This is the diacritical point, the turning point, either away from or towards God; but if the soul finally turns to God, he discovers that He is no longer the God who demands, but the God who gives and forgives." (30)

This experience of the grace of God which transforms our whole outlook is not the natural outcome of the process which leads to despair. It is a supernatural event, wrought by God alone. This

(27) Matthew XXII, 27.

(28) The Divine Imperative. 145.

(29) Romans IV, 15.

(30) The Divine Imperative. 146.

is the revelation given in the Cross of Christ through which the Law is at once perfectly fulfilled and finally abrogated. In this way God leads us through the Law to Himself. It is this aspect of the Law which used to be described as the *usus elencticus legis*. "In this experience of the grace of God - which is not possible apart from the Law - the legalistic interpretation of the Will of God is seen to be sin, the sin par excellence, the desire of man to live his own life in his own way, apart from God. This is the dialectical element in the Law: it leads directly to the true knowledge of God, in order that then, at the moment when the threshold has been crossed, it may be seen in its true colours, as absolute ignorance of God, as the real enemy to the knowledge of God." (31)

c. The usus didacticus legis.

Luther laid great emphasis on the function of the Law which we have just described. There is a third use of the Law which Calvin brought out more clearly than Luther did; its instructive function.

The believer still needs the Law partly, because even as a believer he still finds much unbelief in his life and needs daily to be driven to repentance, partly, because even in faith the Law is a valuable guide to him on the path of life. It is true, of course, that the instrument of the divine guidance is the Holy Spirit, but He does not operate in vacuo. "The Spirit must expound the Law; but He can only do so if the Law exists and continues to exist." (32)

(31) *ibid.* 146.

(32) *ibid.* 148.

There is, however, a two-fold change in the Law as it is known to faith.

- 1) The supremacy of the first commandment, or law of love, as the principle by which our lives are to be ruled, is clearly understood, and all instructions, whether commands or prohibitions, are related to that.
- 2) The Law is no longer the command of the Lord to the slave but the instruction of the father to the son. Through the Law the child of God is given directions and guidance for the daily path. "The general "direction, all that can be known beforehand, comes to the assistance "of him who in faith is united with God and with his neighbour, that "he may really act in harmony with love, and may not make a mistake." (33)

Thus the Law works according to its three-fold function: as the word of discipline, repentance and guidance.

3. The Relation of the Law and the Gospel.

Brunner maintains the traditional order of the Law and the Gospel. In this he claims to be following in the footsteps of Paul and Luther against Barth who has reversed the traditional order and given the Gospel priority over the Law. Brunner acknowledges that Barth's concern here for the supremacy of the Word of Jesus Christ as God's summons to obedience is Scriptural and not to be gainsaid. Nevertheless the Reformers who were no whit less insistent on the supremacy of Christ still maintained the order, the Law and the Gospel.

(33) *ibid.* 150.

Barth has not fully understood the significance of Law as it appears in Paul's Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians and in the teaching of Luther, especially in his controversies with the Antinomians. Barth has stopped thinking about the Law where Luther begins to think deeply, and in consequence he over simplifies the relation of the Law and the Gospel. "The question of the relation between the law and revelation cannot be answered unambiguously." "The Law is not a plain and simple entity, but, in the most rigid sense of the word, it is ambiguous. It has a dialectical relation to the revelation of Grace." (34)

The Law, as we have seen, is at once God's own Law and "the fundamental principle of the natural self-understanding of man." "For this very reason, because it stands in this antithesis to the righteousness of God, and yet at the same time is God's Law, there exists between the Law and the Gospel a remarkable dialectical relation." (35)

This dialectical relation of the Law and the Gospel is expounded by Brunner from many different angles.

a. The Law is known to all, yet only truly known in the Gospel.

The Law is implanted in the hearts of men and is known to all, at least to some extent. It is the divine instrument which continually reminds men of the Will of God and holds man in a relation of responsibility to it.

(34) Man in Revolt. 162, 519.

(35) *ibid.* 518.

But as such it is imperfect and unsatisfactory in two respects.

- 1) While the Law is written in every man's heart, being the inalienable characteristic of human nature which makes man man, it is only known obscurely and uncertainly. "The Law of God is implanted in the hearts of all men; but, as comes out plainly enough in historical and daily experience, it is at the same time covered by the rubbish of sin. Hence it must be revealed anew." (36)
- 2) Even where it is revealed and plainly understood the Law does not give a true and satisfying knowledge of the Will of God. "In so far as the 'law' is revealed in the Old Testament it belongs (according to Gal. IV.) to the Old Covenant, to the 'Jerusalem which now is'. For in principle it does not lead further than the lex naturae; it always remains at that cognito legalis which, as such, is not the truth of the true God and of the true Will of God." (37) Indeed it is the very Law which reminds us of the Will of God that hides the Will of God from us.

This is shown most clearly where the law is truly interpreted in the two-fold love-commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" and the second, which 'is like unto it,' "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (38) "The 'Thou shalt', the commandment as law, only exists for him who is no longer in communion with God and therefore does not take love to be the most natural thing in the world. The law already manifests the breach

(36) *ibid.* 162.

(37) *ibid.* 162.

(38) Matthew XXII. 37 ff.

"which has been made; thus it conceals while it announces the Will
 "of God. It gives a God to man with whom it is possible to enter
 "into right relations through the correct fulfilment of the law.
 "But this view is not only erroneous, it is sinful: it is false
 "human independence, self-righteousness. The very man who thinks
 "that through the fulfilment of this commandment he is doing the
 "Will of God, shows by this very fact that he has no idea of the Will
 "of God; true as it is, on the other hand, that the love of God and
 "man is the Will of God." (39)

When man takes that Law seriously and endeavours to keep it,
 he is driven to despair from which only the grace of God's forgiving
 love can save him. When that happens he comes to understand the
 true character of the Law. The Sermon on the Mount which is the
 Law at its best is recognised to be "a Messianic order of life; given
 "to those who know the grace of God in Jesus Christ, who do not live
 "in strivings after God, but who live in the grace they receive from
 "God. The real meaning of this law lies beyond all 'law'; it is
 "revealed where it is abrogated, in that it is fulfilled: in the
 "Cross of Christ." (40)

In this dialectic of the natural and revealed understanding
 of the Law we see how "the point of greatest nearness to God is at
 "the same time the point of greatest distance from God, the most
 "direct point of contact is at the same time the greatest point of
 "contradiction. The meaning of the law can only be understood in
 "the overcoming of the Law." (41)

(39) Man in Revolt. 160-161.

(40) *ibid.* 162.

(41) *ibid.* 161.

b. The Law is necessary to salvation, yet only the Gospel saves.

It is through the Law that men come to know what sin and despair are. This is not a knowledge that we come to of ourselves since our natural tendency is to evade the condemnation of the law. But God takes the law and holds it before our eyes so that we cannot evade its judgment which is inevitably a judgment of death. Thus God "kills" through the law. This includes not only the Law in its accepted sense but all that has this effect and may, therefore, even include the Gospel. All that drives men to despair and thus constitutes the condition out of which repentance may be awakened is the work of the Law.

Man driven by the Law to despair does not, however, pass naturally through it to repentance and faith. Despair has two aspects. From the standpoint of the natural man and his self-knowledge despair has no hope in it and no outlet. There is no way from man to God. This is the desperatio diabolica, the despair of the man who remains under the Law, and therefore also under the wrath of God.

But while there is no way from man to God there is a way from God to man. "Viewed from man's standpoint all we can say is: Lost! "No immanental dialectic leads us beyond this terrible negative conclusion. But in the Hands of God this same law, which in itself "only works death, becomes repentance. It is the divine work of "grace that repentance arises out of this terror of the law; but "repentance must pass through this terror in face of the merciless

"law. That is the divine 'pedagogy'." (42) This is the desperatio evangelica, the despair which through the grace of God leads to repentance and faith. Thus in God's Hands the Law becomes the παιδαγωγὸς εἰς Χριστόν. But while it leads to Christ along the way of the Law, one only comes to Christ Himself through the message of forgiving grace, through which the Holy Spirit works and creates free obedience. Both the Law and the Gospel are necessary.

"The self-understanding of the natural man from the standpoint of the law must come to its own end; and with it the independent human being. Hence the work of the law is the opus alienum of God; God as it were goes after man along his path, and leads him to the end of it, before He can show him the other right way, the way of grace, which leads man back to his original being, to his being in the gracious Word of God. That is why there is this order, the Law, and then the Gospel." (43)

c. The Gospel delivers from the Law, yet the Law is still operative.

The chief merit of the Gospel is that it delivers men who have come to the end of their tether from the curse of the Law into that free life of the Spirit which is the gracious gift of God. This life of faith and obedience is a reality even though it is imperfect while we live in the flesh. "But true as it is that as a believer the Christian is no longer under the Law, as a sinner he continually

(42) *ibid.* 521.

(43) *ibid.* 523.

"comes under it. This is the final dialectic of the Law and the "Gospel." (44) So far as sin finds a place in our lives the Law is still operative, for sin must be condemned and the sinner driven into the arms of God. "It is not the fact that man is apprehended "by God, which belongs to faith as such which is meant, but the "death-dealing Law, which is different from the Gospel, which indeed "in its office and work is opposed to it - in order that man may "learn more and more to live through faith alone, on the generous "grace of God alone." (45) Alongside this "death-dealing Law" there is another to which the believer is subject. (46) This is the true Will of God which is the fulfilment of the Law in which God's Will is only known in an indirect and broken manner.

(44) *ibid.* 524.

(45) *ibid.* 525.

(46) I Corinthians IX, 21.

III. C. THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

Pages

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B. BARTH'S DOCTRINE OF THE GOSPEL AND THE LAW.

1. The Gospel and the Law.

a. Barth rejects the traditional order: the Law and the Gospel.

The traditional order 'the Law and the Gospel' which Brunner maintains is rejected by Barth as being misleading and unsatisfactory. It makes a false separation of the Old Testament and the New Testament regarding the former as "the classic "document of a law and thus a work religion," (1) and the latter as containing the gospel of the grace of God.

Since the New Testament has also its laws for the new life of God's children, a second error easily creeps in. Alongside the message of the reconciliation of the world to God through Christ there is the proclamation of a new law, which appears to give the Gospel its ethical character and suggests that besides faith men are also called to free moral decision. Thus there must be a constant alternation in our attitude to the message. "Now we have to think of Christ and His work, now of bettering our own condition, now we must lay everything in God's Hand, now take everything again into our own, now to believe and now to love and do all manner of good." (2)

This almost inevitably leads to a third error, that of

(1) Barth. Dogmatik I.2. 339.

(2) Dogmatik I.2. 341.

the inversion of the true relation of those two parts of the New Testament message. It is so much easier to deal with the concrete questions of daily life than with the questions of faith, and it appears so much more practical, that the emphasis is placed there and, while we pay lip service to the background of faith in Christ, our real interest is in our self-justification. (3)

The results are: (1) that we no longer abide by God's self-revelation, but are in the sphere of our own ideas. "The relation (between the Gospel and the Law) is such that whoever really and truly would say first Law and then, under that presupposition, Gospel would not, even with the best of intentions, speak of God's Law and therefore not of His Gospel."

(4) Another result is: (2) that there is a constant vacillation between a legalism with all kinds of observances and disciplines and an antinomianism which rejects all concrete demands or obligations. (5)

b. Barth maintains that the true order is: the Gospel and The Law.

"The Gospel is not Law as the Law is not Gospel: but since the Law is in the Gospel, comes from the Gospel and is directed to the Gospel, we must know first what the Gospel is

(3) cf. Dogmatik I. 2. 339-342.

(4) Barth Evangelium und Gesetz. Theologische Existenz heute XXII. 3. quoted as T.E.h. 32.

(5) Ibid. 22. c.f. T.E.h. XXVII. 34.

"in order to know what the law is, and not the reverse." (6)

Barth establishes the primacy of the Gospel by an appeal to the nature of the Word of God. The Word is one and the same whether heard in the Gospel or the Law. That we hear it at all is always an act of grace, and what we hear is always the free sovereign grace of God. Since the Gospel "has grace as its particularly direct content" it has priority over the Law which "included in the Gospel and relative to it is not less God's Word." (7)

The significance of the Gospel is that Christ, God's Eternal Word, has become flesh and done in our stead what we could not do for ourselves. We assert ourselves over against God and refuse to accept His proffered grace. In this lies our sin and our condemnation. Jesus Christ is the whole content of the Gospel. "Grace, and thus the content of the Gospel, consists therefore simply in this: that Jesus Christ with His humanity, which was assumed at His birth, approved as obedience in His death and glorified in His resurrection - He Himself and He alone - took our place with our humanity." (8) He "believed i.e. said not 'no' but 'yes' to grace and thus to man's state as condemned and lost." (9) Man's situation

(6) T.E.h. XXXII. 3.

(7) *ibid.* 5.

(8) *ibid.* 7.

(9) *ibid.* 6.

under grace, therefore, is one in which Christ with His perfect humanity takes man's place in such a way that man's own humanity is, as Paul says, "dead, and alive only as he is in Christ "i.e. as Jesus Christ is become its subject. I am crucified "with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ "liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I "live by the faith of the Son of God (to be understood quite "literally: I live - not somehow by my faith in the Son of "God but by this, that the Son of God believed!) who loved me "and gave Himself for me." (10) (11)

This point, viz. that man's faith, where it is true, is not the result of any activity or merit on man's part but the pure gift of God's grace, is one which Barth is constantly stressing. "Man believes that he is in the fellowship of the "saints, that he has received, receives and will receive forgiveness of sins, that he is hastening towards the resurrection of "the body and the life everlasting, but that is actual fact not "because of his faith, not even in part by the victory of his "faith - it is actual fact only because the Lord Jesus Christ was "born a man for us, died for us, rose from the dead for us, is "likewise his Lord, his Confidence, his Fortress and his God. "Jesus Christ, He Himself and He alone is the grace bestowed on "such a man." (12)

(10) Galatians II. 19-20.

(11) T.E.h. XXXII. 8.

(12) *ibid.* 8.

The Law like the Gospel is God's revealed will so that while it is distinguished from the Gospel it is not to be separated from it. It can, therefore, be rightly known and understood only from the revelation of God's grace in Jesus Christ who is the fulfiller of the Law. From the revelation of what God has done for us we learn what He requires with us and from us. For we cannot receive God's revelation in Christ without hearing in it the claim of God upon our lives. "Be ye therefore - more exactly and accurately - ye shall be "perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (13)

The preaching of grace means the setting up of the Law. "How "could the Lordship of Jesus Christ be preached without such "preaching being in itself a summons to obedience, or the In- "carnation otherwise than as the command to self-denial, or "the Cross of Christ otherwise than an order to follow Him and "to take up one's own cross. . . . The very faith in the "articulis stantis et cadentis ecclesiae, in the word of the "justification of the sinner through the atonement made by "the Blood of Christ, means purification, sanctification, re- "newal, or it means nothing at all, it is unbelief, heresy, "superstition." (14)

(13) Matthew V. 48.

(14) T.E.h. XXXII. 10-11.
cf. Dogmatik I. 2. 297 f.

2. The Relation of the Gospel and the Law.

a. The Law is the necessary form of the Gospel.

In view of what has been said above about the nature of the Gospel and the Law, Barth defines their relation to each other in general terms thus: "The Law is none other than the "necessary form of the Gospel, whose content is grace." (15) The Law therefore has no existence independent of the Gospel. In its historical origin it was a sign and seal of the covenant of grace and election between God and His chosen people. (16) This continues to be its content. "The Law of Israel set in "the first place before all the commandments God the Commander "as the One to be feared and loved, 'I am the Lord thy God, "'which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the "'house of bondage.' (17) Under this Law Paul also stood when "he understood and designated himself as the servant of Jesus "Christ apprehended by Him and bound to Him. Under this νόμος τοῦ "πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς (18) he saw the believers of the "New Covenant also standing. One can, and must, as a matter "of fact, understand the entire possibility of human partici- "pation in God's revelation - despite the familiar reformed "dialectic of the Law and the Gospel - also under the well "understood conception of the divine Law." (19)

(15) *ibid.* 11.

(16) *Dogmatik I. 2.* 395.

(17) *Exodus XX. 2.*

(18) *Romans VIII. 2.*

(19) *Dogmatik I. 2.* 299.

Only a Law related to the Gospel as form to content, and thus having behind it the revelation of God's grace in Jesus Christ, can really claim men and lay an inescapable command upon them. (20) Any other Law which lays upon us obligations to be met by our own powers and in our own strength results in evasions and excuses. (21) "The Word of God has boundless power to command because it doesn't impose on us a new, final and terrible, because endless, responsibility, but demands our answers, our willing and acting, the performance which it of course requires of us, not as our own independent work for whose success we have to answer, but as service in the execution of which we are borne and covered by the work which it does itself." (22)

To understand, therefore, what is demanded of us in the Law we must return to the content of the Gospel, to the fact that Jesus has fulfilled the Law and kept all the commandments. "The Law testifies to the grace of God . . . But the grace of God is Jesus Christ who with His human nature (Menschsein) takes our place. He does so thus, that in our place - it required the eternal Word made flesh for this - He believed and that means said yes to God's majesty and thus to man's misery. In this faith of His He has once for all accomplished

(20) *ibid.* 423.

(21) *ibid.* 299.

(22) *ibid.* 299.

"What God desires with and from man, He has fulfilled the Law, and kept all the commandments. All the commandments bear witness to and aim at this faith which He entirely alone has established as true." (23)

This being so all that God requires of us is that we should believe. We cannot believe as Christ has, since none other than the Eternal Word made flesh can so believe. But we can believe in Christ and that means, "to acknowledge and accept as our own life His vicarious faith which we shall never make our own, which therefore we do not possess here or for ourselves, or in our own hands, or at our own disposal, but which is above, hidden with Him in God." (24) (25)

This is the significance of the first commandment and, indeed, all others. In this faith the Law and all its commandments are kept by us. This faith is the work and gift of the Holy Spirit for which we can only pray.

b. Our Perversion of the Law.

Both the Gospel and the Law are a revelation of God's grace. The divine intention in giving them to us is to do for us that which we cannot do for ourselves. The use we make of these gifts when they are put into our hands reveals, as nothing

(23) T.E.h. XXXII. 13.

(24) Colossians III. 1f.

(25) T.E.h. XXXII. 14.

else could, the true nature of sin. Instead of accepting the demands of the Law as a witness to God's grace in Jesus Christ we hear them as a call to us to obey them in our own strength. Thus sin, as Paul says, uses the Law as a springboard and comes to full and active life. For faced with the demands of the Law we endeavour to establish our own righteousness in independence of God. We turn the divine "Thou shalt" into a human "Thou oughtest." The zeal with which we throw ourselves into this, and which we regard as zeal for God, is but a mark of our disobedience "Sin triumphs in this zeal more, far more, than in what we know as idolatry etc. . . . because herein His gift of the Law . . . God Himself has been made the occasion and pretext for sin." (26)

With this perversion of the Law there goes also a perversion of the Gospel whose form it is. "Here out of Jesus Christ, who bestows all things on His own since, in the majesty of God Himself, He steps into their place, is made a demi-god who communicates to them imaginary powers, a kind of magical endowment." (27) Jesus is thus turned into a helpful companion and the wholesome stumbling-block of the Cross is set aside. Such a Christ, and such a Gospel, has never brought help or strength to men in the hour of temptation, to say nothing about

(26) T.E.h. XXXII. 19.

(27) *ibid.* 21.

salvation. It matters not what content is given to the Law - natural law, abstract reason, history, folks law - where Christ is not its goal there is a constant vacillation between legalism and antinomianism. We fall, as Paul says, from faith in the one living God into the service of the elemental powers of paganism. (28) (29)

The Law thus treated by us does not cease to be God's claim upon us and the result of our inability to fulfil it is that judgment lies over all our works. It is now "the Law of sin and death." (30) This is what the Law becomes in our hands, the enemy of faith and hope and love.

c. What God makes of it.

One of the characteristic differences between Luther and Calvin is the place they give to the Law. Luther sets it in the forefront of his catechism and emphasises the part the law plays in driving men to despair of their own power to keep it. Calvin's first thought is that God, the Father of Jesus Christ, has given us the Law, whatever we may make of it. Therefore he sets faith in God before the Law. It is that man whose entire trust is in God who will also have a right relation to the will of God. He will know of his failure to keep the Law but also

(28) Galatians IV. 8f.

(29) T.E.h. XXXII. 22.

(30) Romans VIII. 2.

that in Christ the Law is fulfilled. This, for Calvin, is more important than our failure to keep it. (31) It is this which makes it a real Law for our lives. "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (32) That is not a crushing, killing Law. It would only be that if we had heard it, not from the mouth of Jesus Christ from whom it comes as a law fulfilled by Him, but as a human rule, which we must fulfil. Heard from Him it is indeed Law, but Law as promise and form of the Gospel, Gospel in Law. Is there a happier and more comforting message than this, that God desires this likeness between Himself and us and has already created it in Jesus Christ. (33)

It is our sin that we will not hear the Gospel in the Law but are ever striving to establish our own righteousness through the Law. That we do come to hear it is a miracle of the grace and love of God. "Behold, I make all things new!" Before this "I" shall no flesh, really no flesh, be able to boast, not even that it has not offered opposition! His making anew begins exactly at the point where from our side . . . the word "I do not frustrate the grace of God" (34) can only be said as the acknowledgment of a miracle and a gift that has befallen us and simultaneously with the acknowledgment that "I am the

(31) T.E.h. XXVII. 34.

(32) Matthew V. 48.

(33) Dogmatik I. 2. 436.

(34) Galatians II. 21.

"chief of sinners." (35) (36) This is the victory of God which may be considered from three points of view.

1. The grace of God, Jesus Christ Himself, reveals Himself as Saviour through the Law. He alone can do this, and when He does it is pure miracle which we cannot understand but only accept. "The sequence Law-Gospel, Sin-Righteousness . . . is identical with the sequence Death - Life. But that means that as a sequence it is quite unintelligible to us. It can only be event and fact and from our standpoint can only be believed as the promise of what Jesus Christ does in us, and in this faith we will be a miracle to ourselves. We will, in fact, only be able to believe, without any knowledge of the possibility of what we do." (37)

Thus our knowledge of our sinfulness as well as of our being forgiven and saved is ever dependent on Christ and is never our own achievement or possession.

2. The grace of God, Jesus Christ Himself, makes us free from the "Law of sin and death" (38) Since God is for us, His own Law has no longer power to condemn us. In the victory of God the Law is seen in its true character as the form of the Gospel. The demand, "Thou shalt", becomes the promise, "Thou wilt be", and the claim upon our accomplishment, a claim upon

(35) I Timothy I. 15.

(36) T.E.h. XXXII. 27.

(37) *ibid.* 28.

(38) Romans VIII. 2.

our trust. "Then the Law speaks no longer as instrument of
 "the deceitfulness of sin and as organ of the wrath of God,
 "but in its actual, original significance as witness, as revela-
 "tion of Him who makes all things well and who asks nothing from
 "us except that we believe: He will make all things well." (39)

This, too, we have only in and through Jesus Christ.

3. "The Grace of God, Jesus Christ Himself, gives us what we
 "need in order that our justification and deliverance, consummated
 "in Him, may become a reality in ourselves, the Holy Spirit of
 "power, love and self-discipline. (40) (41) From the gift of
 the Holy Spirit comes power to abide in Christ, love to Christ
 and to others, self-discipline that will keep us ever seeking
 Him who alone is our Deliverer. This gift of the Holy Spirit
 is no magic or enchantment. Those who have the Holy Spirit
 may be known by the fact that they make no pretensions but know
 themselves to be poor before God. To such the Gospel and the
 Law are not given in vain but to their eternal salvation.

(39) T.E.h. XXXII. 29.

(40) II Timothy I. 7.

(41) T.E.h. XXXII. 30.

III. C. THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

Pages

C. CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF THE DOCTRINES OF BARTH
AND BRUNNER.

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C. CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF THE DOCTRINES OF BARTH AND BRUNNER.

In supporting the traditional order, the Law and the Gospel, Brunner has followed three lines of argument, giving more weight now to one, now to another. In the earlier stages of the discussion, marked by the essays on "Die andere Aufgabe der Theologie" (1) and "Die Frage nach dem 'Anknüpfungspunkt' als Problem der Theologie" (2) and his great book on ethics "Das Gebot und die Ordnungen" 1932, the emphasis is on the function of the Law as the Divine agent for bringing men into the narrow pass of despair through which alone they can come to faith. In "Das Gebot und die Ordnungen", however, a larger place is given to man's natural knowledge of the Law in the divine "Orders" which form the groundwork for his earthly life, and through which he can "in some measure" know the Will of God, and this is given even greater prominence in the polemical pamphlet "Natur und Gnade" 1934. Both these lines of argument are carried on into "Der Mensch im Widerspruch" 1937, but here their roots are traced deeper to the legalistic structure of human nature in virtue of which fallen man is held in a relationship of responsibility to God. I do not suggest that these three lines of argument are either independent or mutually exclusive. All have been present, in some measure, in Brunner's writings over the past fifteen years. (3) There has been, however, that change of emphasis to which attention is here drawn, a

(1) Zwischen den Zeiten. 1929. 255-276.
Quoted as Z.d.Z.

(2) Z.d.Z. 1932. 505-532.

(3) Man in Revolt. 10 f., 514 f.

change due, in part at least, to the criticism which Brunner's thesis has had to face. It will help to clarify the problem if we look briefly at each of these arguments.

1. The Law as a necessary instrument in leading men to Christ.

As we have already seen Brunner lays considerable emphasis on what the older Protestant theologians called the second use of the Law. Man in his rebellion against God seeks to escape from the relationship of dependence on and responsibility to God. In rebelling against God man's life loses its true meaning and purpose, nevertheless God does not leave man but through the Law continues to hold man in a relationship to Himself. The Law "is and remains the "divine factor in the lost situation of the sinner." (4) This is the most fruitful point of contact which the Christian preacher finds in the natural man. (5) Therefore theology must be "eristic" as well as dogmatic (6), and "it is the task of our theological generation to find its way back to a true natural theology." (7) Through the Law, God brings men to the realisation of their lost situation which is the necessary prelude to an experience of the grace of God. "God as it were goes after man along his path, and leads him to the "end of it, before He can show him the other right way, the way of "grace, which leads man back to his original being, to his being in "the gracious Word of God. That is why there is this order, the "Law and then the Gospel." (8)

(4) *ibid.* 519.

(5) *Z.d.Z.* 1932. 515 ff.

(6) *Z.d.Z.* 1929. 255 ff.

(7) *Natur und Gnade.* 44.

(8) *Man in Revolt.* 523.

In this connection Brunner widens his definition of the Law to include the Gospel in so far as that may be used by God to bring home to men their lost and desperate situation, and create the contrition which is the necessary forerunner of faith. "Here the Gospel works "not as the Gospel but as the Law. For it is the office of the law "and not of the Gospel to kill That which kills is according "to its office, law." (9)

Brunner is careful, however, to make it quite clear that there is no direct connection between the despair which is produced by the law, and salvation. The latter is always and only the work of the grace of God through the Holy Spirit. But the preaching of the Law is the necessary preparation for the Gospel since it leads men to discover their inability to keep the Law, breaks their pride and convicts them of sin. Thus the soil of the human heart is prepared for the good seed of the Gospel.

This line of argument has its roots in an interpretation of St. Paul's spiritual experience, especially as it is mirrored in Romans VII, being accepted as the norm of religious experience and prescribed as the missionary method par excellence. No one would seek to deny that same, perhaps many, have found their way to Christ, or rather have been found of Him, along this path. The order, the Law and the Gospel, has a certain validity. But this is far from being the normal human experience. Christian missionaries, as the missionary literature of the past generation shows, are well nigh

(9) *ibid.* 523.

unanimous in their testimony that the preaching of the Law does not of itself create a sense of sin or lead to conversion. (10)

What really brings home to men their sinfulness and need is the revelation of the love of God in Jesus Christ. In the light which falls on life from Him a man comes through a crisis more or less acute to a true self-knowledge. It is then in retrospect that he becomes aware of the misery and sinfulness of his condition when he was yet without Christ and recognises the insufficiency of his previous religion and morality. It is through the transformation wrought by the Gospel that he comes to acknowledge the claims of God upon him and the inescapable obligation laid upon him to keep the Law of Christ. The true order is therefore, not the Law and the Gospel, but, the Gospel and the Law.

2. The Natural Knowledge of the Law.

The above argument for the priority of the Law as a preparation for the Gospel is dependent on the conviction that there is a knowledge of the Law open to the natural man. This knowledge of the Will of God has two main sources. The Will of God is made known to us, objectively, in the "orders" which are the gift of God for the regulation of human life in this world of sin. God's will is also known, subjectively, through the law written in the heart of man whereby we are able to make moral judgments.

(10) cf. Ménégoz in *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie religieuses*, 1937. 11.

A.C. Underwood. *Conversion: Christian and Non-Christian*.
Chap. XI.

a. Through the 'orders'.

It is not necessary for our present purpose to enter into a detailed examination of Brunner's doctrine of the "orders", but only to consider whether they do give us a natural knowledge of God's will. Brunner regards the "orders" as God given constants of human life, and makes a distinction between those which belong to the creation, e.g. Marriage, and those others, e.g. the State, which only belong to man's sinful condition. (11) The point which concerns us here is that while the believer understands these "orders" better than the unbeliever (12), they are also "by the providential "grace of God known and respected by the natural man as necessary "and in some way holy orders" (13), and that their purpose may be "to some extent fulfilled by men who do not know the God who is "revealed in Christ." (14)

That there is something of the nature of general axioms of the moral and social life and that these, being rooted in instinct and reason, are common to all men, believers and unbelievers, is not to be denied. But, asks Barth, with what right do we range these in a hierarchy and what makes them divine commands? Is the claim to be able to do this anything more than a private judgment which must clash with that of others? (15)

(11) The Divine Imperative. 140 ff., 220 ff.
Natur und Gnade. 17 ff.

(12) Natur und Gnade. 18.

(13) *ibid.* 18.

(14) *ibid.* 17.

(15) Barth. Nein! Theologische Existenz heute. 14. 23-24.

The political events of the past decade in Germany have made this an acute question for the Christian Church there and most German theologians have written on the doctrine of "orders". Edmund Schlink surveys many of these contributions in a section of his valuable book on "Der Mensch in der Verkündigung der Kirche" (16), to which I am indebted for much helpful criticism.

Any attempt to establish a theological doctrine of "orders of creation" on the basis of the present empirical orders implies that we are able to distinguish between that which belongs to man's creation and his sinful corruption. This is to ignore, or at least minimise, the gravity of sin and the extent of the damage it has wrought. It infects not this or that department of man's life but his entire being. "With the doctrine of the corruption of creation is excluded the possibility of bringing forward as norms certain provinces of this world as creation and, in turn, the use of such spheres as criteria for the knowledge of God's laws." (17)

This does not deny the existence of divine ordinances which may both be known and kept by the natural man. But these are not known as God's laws nor kept as such. From the standpoint of the natural man they are but natural laws or ordinances whose validity or authority depends on their usefulness or long history or wide distribution. No such criteria are capable of giving to any empirical "orders" the authority of the will of God. "The empirical orders and

(16) 212 ff.

(17) Ed. Schlink. Der Mensch in der Verkündigung der Kirche. 214.
(quoted as Schlink M. V. K.)

"laws are as such not yet *lex naturae*, nor yet *lex Dei*, but the
 "orders of this world first receive a normative significance for
 "knowledge through the divine command revealed in the Word." (18)

In dealing with the question of the sacramental significance
 of water in baptism, Luther in "The Greater Catechism" makes an
 interesting and illuminating comparison of the relationship between
 the element and the Word in the sacrament and the orders of life
 and the divine command. "Mark, then, this distinction: that
 "baptismal water is a very different thing from other water, not
 "because of the natural element, but because something nobler is
 "added to it, for God Himself has bestowed upon it His honour, and
 "given it His strength and power. Therefore it is not merely
 "natural water, but a Divine, heavenly, holy and blessed water,
 "and whatever else can be said in its praise, all for the sake of
 "the Word, which is a heavenly Divine Word, which none can glorify
 "enough, for it is and can accomplish all that is of God
 "For this reason we teach always that the Sacraments and all other
 "outward symbols which God has ordained and appointed are not to
 "be judged by their common outward appearance, as we distinguish
 "between the shell and a kernel, but we are to remember that they
 "include God's Word. For we might speak in the same way of the
 "state of father and mother and those in secular authority, were
 "we only to consider that they have noses, eyes, skin, hair, flesh
 "and bone, just like Turks and heathens; and some might say: Why

"should I think more of them than of others? But because the
 "commandment is given, Thou shalt honour thy father and mother, I
 "behold a different man, adorned and clothed in the splendor and
 "majesty of God. The commandment, I say, is the golden chain he
 "bears about his neck, yea, is like a crown on his head, and shows
 "me how and why I should honour this flesh and blood." (19) The
 orders of human life are related to the Divine Word in the Law as
 the element of water is related to the Divine Word in the sacrament.
 Just as water apart from the Word of the Gospel cannot forgive sin,
 no more can the human orders make sin and guilt known apart from
 the Word of the Divine Law. It is the Word of God in the Script-
 ures which alone is able to distinguish the divine and human ele-
 ments in the natural orders. As Luther puts it in summing up his
 teaching on the Ten Commandments. "Thus we have in the Ten
 "Commandments a summary of Divine instruction telling us what we
 "have to do to make our whole life pleasing to God, and showing
 "us the true source and fountain from and in which all good works
 "must spring and proceed; so that no work nor anything can be good
 "and pleasing to God, however great and costly it be in the eyes of
 "the world, unless it is in keeping with the Ten Commandments." (20)

The true and only valid criterion for the Law is the Word of
 God, and the doctrine of the Law is not a part of natural theology
 but of the theology of revelation. The conclusion of a careful

(19) Luther. The Great Catechism.
 in Luther's Primary Works. Wace and Buchheim. 132.

(20) *ibid.* 89.

study of this question with special reference to Luther's doctrine is expressed by Ernst Wolf thus:- "This insight, that in natural law and in the orders which belong to it and are regulated by it God Himself is working 'under a mask' certainly first comes from the revelation in God's Word. It is not accessible to the natural understanding; it is a matter of faith, a judgment of faith. The 'theology of orders' is therefore a theology of the Word and not something before or beside it." (21)

b. Through the law written in the heart.

The Law of God, it is claimed, is not only known through the objective orders of creation and providence but also subjectively through the law written in the heart. "Although this natural law written in the heart may be 'dimmer' than that which is revealed in the Scriptures, yet here there is no difference in principle." (22) The consequence of having this law written in the heart is that, "Men in some way know God's will." They have "knowledge of the will of God as One who is a lawgiver." Further, "That knowledge of the law of God is in some way also knowledge of God is the clear testimony of Scripture." (23)

The Biblical basis for these statements is the well-known passage in Romans ii, 14 ff. (24) A short exposition of this

(21) E. Wolf. "Naturliches Gesetz" und "Gesetz Christi" bei Luther.
Evangelische Theologie. 1935. 319-320.

(22) Man in Revolt. 520.

(23) Natur und Gnade. 12-13.

(24) *ibid.* I. 1. 46 f. and 48 o.

passage is, therefore, a necessary preliminary to any criticism of Brunner's own views based on it.

Before proceeding to the exposition proper it is to be noted that the relation of verse 16 to verse 15 and of the whole passage 13-16 to the rest of the chapter has always been felt difficult. (25) Some treat verses 13-15 as a parenthesis, as in the Authorised Version. Moffatt re-arranges the verses, regarding verse 16 as the continuation of verse 13 and puts verses 14 and 15 in parenthesis with the note "Ver. 16 is the sequel to the first clause of ver. 14. "The rest of ver. 14 and the whole of ver. 15 form a short paragraph "which is either a marginal note or an awkward insertion. To pre-serve the sequence of thought I have re-arranged the verses as "above." (26) There is, however, no textual justification for this and I only note it here to show that scholars of sound reputation do find the passage difficult and that, therefore, it demands cautious scrutiny before it is used as a basis for doctrine.

A simple solution to the problem of the passage is to apply it to the Gentile converts. This goes back to Augustine (27) and is also favoured by Barth. "The heathen, to whom the prophecy of "Jeremiah xxxi, 33f. has been fulfilled, are, according to the whole "context of the chapter, undoubtedly to be understood as Gentile "Christians." (28) However tempting this may be we must set it aside as unsatisfactory. For one thing it ignores the fact that

(25) Sanday and Headlam in International Critical Commentary. ad. loc.
Adolf Julicher in Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments. ad. loc.

(26) Moffatt. New Testament. ad. loc.

(27) Sanday and Headlam. ad. loc.

(28) Dogmatik. I. 2. 332.

we have the same problem in the Old Testament where the Prophets threaten alien peoples, who have not the Law, with divine judgment on their sins. Moreover, despite Augustine and Barth, there is really little or nothing in the context to indicate that these were Gentile Christians. The most natural reading of the passage is to regard the 'Gentiles' as pagans who have not the advantage of being enlightened by the Jewish Law. In attributing to them the possession of an unwritten moral law implanted by nature in their hearts St. Paul was making use of popular Stoic conceptions. (29)

In verses 13 and 14 it is not asserted either, that every Gentile does works of the law or that any Gentile does all the works of the law. They happen here and there, but they really take place. It is not a question here in Romans ii, 13 f. about a purely hypothetical case. It is to be said of fallen mankind, *aliqua bona faciunt*. (30)

So far St. Paul has ascribed to the Gentiles not a knowledge of the law but the doing of the law. This might be interpreted to mean that man's nature is so fashioned that he instinctively does the work of the law. It is more likely, however, that there is no such separation as this would imply between ver. 14 and ver. 15, which undoubtedly speaks of knowledge of the law. Here there are two possibilities. Either ver. 15 means a knowledge which is now the active possession of the Gentile or, taking ver. 15 in close

(29) Lietzmann. Handbuch zum Neuen Testament. ad loc.

(30) Luther. Römerbriefvorlesung. 1515/16. hgg. v. Ficker II. 41. 26. quoted Schlunk M. V. K. 152.

connection with ver. 16, a knowledge which will become active on the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. "The present ἐνδείκνυται is then, as so often (Radermacher "Gramm 2. 152.) to be taken as future and in conjunction with " ἡ ἡμέρα " (31) The latter seems to me the simpler reading of the text and one more in keeping with the general tenor of St. Paul's teaching, e.g. in I Cor. iv, 4-5. Whether ἐν ἡ ἡμέρᾳ means the day in which the preaching of the Gospel awakens the conscience to full activity and enlightens it concerning the truth about God and His claims, or "on the eschatological day of judgment" is not important for our present argument.

The passage is then to be interpreted thus: 1) The Gentiles do not possess the Law, i.e. the Jewish Torah, in which God's will is revealed to His people.(32) This is the decisive distinction between Jew and Gentile. 2) Nevertheless since the Gentiles do by nature the works of the Law they prove that although they have not the Torah they, too, are made for God and His way of life and have a natural knowledge of right and wrong, i.e. the moral law. 3) But the significance of this is only brought to light on the day when their conscience is awakened and their natural understanding enlightened by the revelation given in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or on the eschatological day of judgment. (33)

(31) Lietzmann. op. cit. 14.

(32) cf. Deuteronomy iv, 5-8.

(33) cf. Matthew xxv, 31 ff.; I Corinthians iv, 5.

Thus in the law written in their hearts the Gentiles have a knowledge of God's will for their lives. But until its significance is revealed to them by the Gospel they do not know this law as God's law and only obey it instinctively. In practice God's law in the heathen heart is mixed up with many others from tradition and custom, etc. and is not rightly known apart from the Gospel. (34)

In the second edition of *Natur und Gnade* Brunner adds an explanatory note to his statement that "men in some way know the "will of God." This "irgend wie", he says, corresponds to what the Reformers called the *cognitis legatis*. (35) As Luther and Calvin put it, the Gentiles know the second table of the Law but not the first, i.e. they know the Law only as Law and not as God's gift of grace. To this it may be answered that the limitation of the natural man's knowledge of the Law to the second table goes further than deny him a knowledge of the laws as God's gift of grace. It means that they are not even known as God's laws. Calvin acknowledges that the second table of the Law may be better known than the first since its precepts "are more closely connected with "the preservation of civil society" but "even here, however, there "is something defective." (36) He then shows how the natural man disregards the precepts of the Law and continues "Our reason is "exposed to so many forms of delusion, is liable to so many errors, "stumbles on so many obstacles, is entangled by so many snares, that

(34) cf. Heinrich Schlier. *Über die Erkenntnis Gottes bei den Heiden. Evangelische Theologie.* 1935. 13 ff.

(35) *Natur und Gnade.* 46 f.

(36) Calvin. *Institutes.* II. 2. 24.

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(27) Sanday and Headlam. ad. loc.

(28) Dogmatik. I. 2. 332.

drawn from other sources, custom, tradition, biological facts, historical necessities, political programmes, personal aims, etc. Man, by nature, uses the categories good and evil and recognises the place of law and order in his life, but this does not mean he thereby recognises and obeys God's laws. As Luther puts it, "It is in fact true that the natural law is known to all and that reason aspires to the best. But after all what kind of a best? It aspires not to what is in conformity with God, but to that which is advantageous to ourselves, i.e. to that which is good in a bad sense. For it seeks in all things itself and its own, not God." (41)

"Indeed, strictly speaking, it is going too far to say, even despite the limiting reference to the incompleteness of man's knowledge of the second table, that anything at all of the second table is known without the Word of God. For the second table separated from the first is no longer a table of the divine law. To that extent the natural man, strictly speaking, does not even know the demands of the second table since these really presuppose the first table." (42)

Thus in practice the natural knowledge of the law is always ignorance of the divine law. Therefore, in spite of Romans 11, 14-16, Paul calls the Gentiles *ἄνομοι*. The natural knowledge of the law which man possesses is corrupted like all his other faculties and

(41) Luther. Römerbriefvorlesung. II. 183. 27 ff.
quoted Schlink M. V. K. 157.

(42) Schlink. M. V. K. 155.

cannot bring him to the truth. Here, too, the Law does not precede the Gospel and Barth is right in holding that only that Law which is known to us through the Gospel has absolute validity for our lives. (43)

3. The Basic Structure of Human Nature.

Professor Otto Weber in an article on the "Imago Dei" in *Deutsche Theologie* (44) draws attention to a passage in Calvin's *Institutes* where two very different meanings are given to the 'natural' man. "Man", says Calvin, "is corrupted by a natural viciousness, but not one which proceeded from nature." In the first case nature means that it is the inevitable condition of all men. All men are of necessity sinful but these sins do not proceed "from nature". (45) In the previous section Calvin shows that our ruin is not to be ascribed to God. Sin is not a fate which overtakes us but guilt, our own individual guilt. It can only be so if while it is "natural" it is not "from nature". Thus the natural man, man as he is, is not the natural man, i.e. man after the divine intention. The Bible speaks of both. Man's nature is his being as God created it and desires to have it, yet his nature is in fact the corruption of what God created and the contradiction of what He desires of us. Natural knowledge of God and His will refers to the second but man can only have this as he draws to it characteristics of the natural man in the first sense.

(43) T.E.h. 32. Dogmatik. I. 2. 423.

(44) 1936. 17-29.

(45) *Institutes*. II. 1. 11.

The decisive characteristic of the natural man is the 'imago Dei'. To apply this 'imago' to the natural man presupposes something undestroyed by sin. It presupposes ability to get behind those two aspects of the 'natural' man to a third neutral man - man in himself.

This is what Brunner attempts to do in his doctrine of the imago Dei. A brief analysis of some of the terms he uses will show this. In an explanatory note added to the second edition of *Natur und Gnade*, Brunner seeks to clarify the conception of the 'formal imago'. "This formal imago itself is not without relation to God It belongs to the nature of man as such, apart from faith or unbelief, sin or redemption, that man is always related to God (gottbezogen), that is, that he has always 'either God or 'an idol', as Luther says. Corresponding to this he has always either the *cognitio evangelica* or the *cognitio legalis*, and he has always either a 'comforted' or an 'evil' despairing conscience, and he is always a believer or an unbeliever. Man can therefore be quite simply defined as: The being who is always related to God (gottbezogen) be it against God (hating God) or for God (loving God)." (46)

Here the basic nature of man is in the neutral 'relatedness to God' (gottbezogenheit) which may be qualified in actual life either positively or negatively.

(46) *Natur und Gnade*. 49-50.

The same idea is expressed in Brunner's use of the word 'person'. This forms the neutral middle term which underlies and connects both formal and material imagos. The material imago is the "personhafte Person" (47) or the true "persönliche Sein" (48) the being in the love of God or fellowship with Him and with one's fellowmen. This is lost through sin but man does not thereby cease to be a person. The personal element still remains the basis of his nature but it is now otherwise qualified. He is now a "wider-" "persönliche Person" (49) or has "eine falsche Personhaftigkeit". (50) Here the ambiguity of the middle term by which Brunner establishes the continuity between man's present condition and the imago Dei is clearly evident. The word 'person' has a double significance. Man is a 'person' because he is a creature endowed with reason and as such is the crown of God's creation. This expresses itself in man's responsibility, i.e. the obligation he feels to respond to the claims made upon him through the common life. At the same time man is not a 'person' because he is a sinner and his life is no longer lived in response to the love of God. "For," as Brunner says, "the true personal being is being in love, self-determination in conformity with the divine determination, that is, self-determination for fellowship with one's fellow-beings out of fellowship with the Creator." (51) Thus the word 'person' is defined in the one

(47) *ibid.* 11.

(48) Brunner. *Gott und Mensch.* 57.

(49) *Natur und Gnade.* 11.

(50) *Gott und Mensch.* 57.

(51) *Natur und Gnade.* 11.

case by man's relation to the world and in the other by his relation to God.

The same ambiguity, as we have noted elsewhere, infects Brunner's use of the word responsibility. It is this ambiguity which enables him to transfer terms true in one sphere to the other to which they do not in fact apply and thus build up his dialectical relationship between man as he now is and the imago Dei in its true sense. This is equally true of a fourth term which Brunner uses to express the same idea - *Gesetzlichkeitsstruktur*. (52) This uncouth compound almost defies translation. Miss Wyon's rendering of "die .. *Gesetzlichkeitsstruktur* des jetzigen Menschseins" as "the present structure of man's being which is based on law" (53) is neat and readable English, but perhaps 'based on law' just fails to express the intimate nature of the relationship of man's being and law. Law is less the foundation on which man's being is erected than the very structure or skeleton itself. This, like the concept of 'responsibility' or that of 'person', is an abstraction, an attempt to reach a neutral "man in himself", and is open to the same objections. Scripture knows nothing of this. It only knows man in his relation to God. This, I think is the point at which Brunner first goes wrong. The theme of his book, he says, is, "Man as he actually is; that is, man in the contradiction between Creation and sin." This contradiction in man can be understood from the point of view of faith "in such a way that we see him as he really is, namely, as one who stands

(52) *Der Mensch im Widerspruch*. 531.

(53) *Man in Revolt*. 514.

"between the creation in the image of God, the original union with God, and sin, the false independence of man." (54) Here the "man in himself" who stands in the contradiction is the element of continuity between the creation, the fall and the redemption. But this, as H. Schlunk shows, is not a distinction which we can possibly make. (55) Barth is right when he maintains that the doctrine of the natural man is only one of sin. The image of God is only known to us because, and in so far as, God speaks to us. Here again it is the Gospel which precedes the Law both as its only criterion and the source of the power by which the Law may be kept.

So far I find myself in agreement with Barth. Yet it seems to me that in his desire to maintain unimpaired the sole efficacy of the grace of God in the process of salvation Barth carries his reaction too far.

For Barth the Christian life is only to be understood in an eschatological sense. It belongs in a sense to our present existence but only as a promise and not as a reality. This means that the Christian life cannot stand under the Law. Its sign is not the imperative, "Thou oughtest" but the future indicative, "Thou shalt be." Since sin belongs of necessity to our temporal existence we cannot be Christians in this world. We can only become Christian on the other side of the boundary which separates eternity and time, God and man, where we become conformable to God. ("gottförmig") To

(54) *ibid.* 478.

(55) Schlunk. M. V. K. 131 ff.

be a Christian is, in a quite literal sense, to be "a new creature".(56)

Thus to deny any connection between the old and the new is to overlook the metaphorical character of the Pauline formula and the fact that in Scripture the same transforming experience can be expressed in other ways. The Old Testament singer tells how -

"He took me from a fearful pit,
and from the miry clay,
And on a rock he set my feet,
establishing my way." (57)

And in the New Testament we learn how one "came to himself" which meant a con-version from the self-centred attitude of his "Father, "give me" to that of "Father ... make me." In these cases it is recognised that however radical the process of conversion may be it does not involve an absolute and entire discontinuity between the old and the new. In other words the process of conversion is personal and ethical and the 'new creation' of which St. Paul speaks is not the work of an omnipotent act of divine power but a miracle of grace in which "the love of Christ constraineth us." (58) This does not deny the profound religious truth which acknowledges God to be the Initiator and Sustainer of this process. But the grace of God is not a something which exercises the same kind of compulsion on us as a gust of wind or a dose of medicine. While man's part in the process is dependent on and subordinate to the work of God the antinomy remains unresolved. This antinomy is implicit in the distinctive Christian conception of the character of the relation

(56) II Corinthians v, 17.

(57) Psalm xl, 2.

(58) II Corinthians v, 14.

of God to man as summed up in the word love. The experience of love as Professor Pringle-Pattison says in his Gifford Lectures is a testimony to the relative independence of selves.

"It takes two not only to make a bargain; it takes two to love and be loved, two to worship and to be worshipped Surely, as the poet says, sweet love were slain could difference be abolished; the most self-effacing love but ministers to the intensity of a double fruition. As in the love of man and woman, so in a great friendship the completest identification of interests and aims does not merge the friends in one; the most perfect alter ego must remain an alter if the experience is to exist, if the joy of an intensified life is to be tasted at all And when we come finally to the religious consciousness the same necessity holds If the specific religious insight is the recognition of dependence, it is only inasmuch as we have a certain independent status that we can recognise and affirm the dependence. When the religious man identifies himself with the perfection of the whole, and, as it were, appropriates it to himself, the very act of self-identification implies the individual difference of the self that makes it. Otherwise the whole thing is a puppet show, and we fall back on the vulgar pantheism which makes the Absolute the direct agent in everything that is done The relation of the Absolute to finite individuals cannot, in fact, be properly stated in terms of the old metaphysic of substance. The essential feature of the Christian

"conception of the world, in contrast to the Hellenic, may be said
 "to be that it regards the person and the relations of persons to
 "one another as the essence of reality, whereas Greek thought con-
 "ceived of personality, however spiritual, as a restrictive character-
 "istic of the finite - a transitory product of a life which as a
 "whole is impersonal. Modern Absolutism seems, in this respect, to
 "revert to the pre-Christian mode of conception, and to repeat also
 "the too exclusively intellectualistic attitude, which characterises
 "Greek thought in the main. But no solution of the problem of God
 "and man can be reached from consideration of man as a merely cognit-
 "ive being. Bare will is certainly an abstraction; but so is
 "knowledge, if it is not regarded as the moving and determining
 "force in a personality, shaping its attitude to the world and all
 "the action which is the outcome of that attitude. In this sense
 "it is the character, or spiritual will, that is the concrete person-
 "ality. It is as such a will that man is independent. To be a self
 "is to be a formed will, originating its own actions and accepting
 "ultimate responsibility for them. For in all questions of moral
 "causation the person is necessarily, in our explanations, a terminus
 "ad quem or a terminus a quo. He is the source of the action: we
 "cannot go behind him and treat him as a thoroughfare through which
 "certain forces operate and contrive to produce a particular result.
 "The person is certainly not a fixed and unchangeable unit. He is
 "open to moral education and spiritual regeneration: he may change

"so much as to become, in the expressive phrase of religion, a new
 "creature. But although he is thus open to all the influences of
 "the universe, these do not act on him like forces ab extra. They
 "make their appeal to him, but he must give the response. He cannot
 "be driven, he must be drawn. And, therefore, the process of trans-
 "formation is always, in a very real aspect of it, his own act, his
 "deliberate choice. We may believe in the ultimately constraining
 "power of the Good, but a moral being cannot be commandeered; he
 "must be persuaded, and the process may be long. 'Behold, I stand
 "'at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door,
 "'I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.' Even
 "the divine importunity will not force an entrance. This freedom
 "belongs to a self-conscious being as such, and it is the fundamental
 "condition of the ethical life; without it we should have a world of
 "automata." (59)

There is a duality in the religious and moral life, a relative
 independence of the creature over against the Creator. The Christian
 life is undoubtedly the fruit of the Spirit of God and not of man's
 own striving, but biological metaphors must not be pushed too far.
 Man is neither a fig nor a grape and in practice there is an element
 of uncertainty between the call of God and man's response. This
 uncertainty has its roots in man's possession of a will in virtue
 of which it is possible for him to respond to or reject the divine
 appeal. This does not exclude recognition of the humble and joyful

(59) Pringle-Pattison. The Idea of God. 289-292.

(59) Pringle-Pattison. The Idea of God. 289-292.

testimony of every truly religious man that his salvation is due to God and God alone. These two conceptions are only mutually exclusive when the relations of God and man are conceived causally. Where that is done the causality must either be sought purely upon the side of God, and man regarded as the passive object of the divine operation, or else the causality is distributed between them both, although in unequal proportions, with the result that the truth of the sole efficacy of the grace of God is endangered. But to think of the relations of God and man in this way is to conceive them in terms of physical necessity. Yet while it is undoubtedly true that on the lower levels of behaviour external compulsion and internal freedom are contradictory, the one to the other, this is not so in the sphere of personal relationships where external help and internal freedom may be the obverse and reverse sides of a single experience. It is from this point of view, which has been freshly illuminated by the work done in recent times by Buber, Ebner and others (60), that the realism of the Bible, which maintains both sides of the antinomy, can best be understood. There the sovereignty of God, the necessity of and the all-sufficiency of His redemptive grace are not for a moment in doubt. On the other hand the grace of God does not save man mechanically or magically. Man is not an inert object but a being capable of response and, since he is implicated in evil, one to whom God makes constant appeal through His Law to return to the right and good way. This is the view taken not only by prophets

(60) see Cullberg. *Das Du und die Wirklichkeit*. Uppsala. 1933.

and apostles but also by Jesus Himself. The Scriptures are thus full of imperatives, and passages such as Philippians ii, 12-13, show how necessary it is to maintain both the Law and the Gospel.

I think this is a necessary corrective to Barth's excessive devaluation of the relative religious and ethical independence of the individual. This tendency is to be seen not only in his desire to replace all imperatives by futures but also in such perversities of exegesis as his contention that the genetive in "the faith of "Christ" (61) is subjective and not objective. (62) It may be objected that Barth does recognise the place of imperatives in the Christian life when he describes the Law as the form of the Gospel and says "How could the lordship of Jesus Christ be preached without "the preaching as such being a demand for obedience, or the incarnation otherwise than as a command to self-denial, or the Cross of "Christ otherwise than as an order to follow Him and take up one's "own Cross." (63) Barth's sole intention, it may be said, is to set the Law in its true relation to the Gospel and to maintain unimpaired the evangelical doctrine of man's insufficiency either to will or to do any good thing. But Barth here, and indeed in all his doctrine of the relations of God and man, goes much further. Man is not only subordinated to and utterly dependent on God, Nature to Grace, the Law to the Gospel, but the one is swallowed up in the

(61) Romans iii, 22. Galatians ii, 16. etc.

(62) T.E.h. 32. 6.

(63) T.E.h. 32. 10-11.

other. This failure to recognise the dialectic of the Law and the Gospel and the attempt to achieve a premature unity not only means that the testimony of Scripture is set aside but also that facts are subordinated to theory. Morality is subordinate to and dependent on religion, the Law to the Gospel, but the one is not to be submerged in the other. The duality remains and must be maintained. If the appeal of God to man is bereft of its personal and moral character the divine activity becomes but a natural activity of a higher order. This not only imperils the dignity of man's personality but inevitably perverts the idea of God's nature. However difficult it may be, then, the antinomy must be maintained. The order is the Gospel and the Law but both have their necessary and rightful place in the divine economy of grace.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

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IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

1. Outline of the Controversy.

Before setting down what seem to me to be the main results of this controversy between Barth and Brunner, and the eager discussion to which it has given rise, a very brief résumé of the debate may not be out of place.

Barth's attack on natural theology was not confined to that pure type of natural theology which claims to dispense entirely with any revelation. Indeed, he was, if possible, even more emphatic in his rejection of every theology of revelation which keeps a natural theology as its substructure. This he regarded as even more dangerous than the plain denial of the need for revelation since the history of theology, eg. that of the past two centuries, has shown that a theology of revelation, while it may retain the language of revelation, is lost when it presupposes a natural theology. If man, so runs the argument, really knows by nature the true God then there is no radical separation of God and man such as requires revelation to bridge. But a God who is not separated from man by a gulf which cannot be bridged from man's side is not a God. Every natural theology regards man's relation to God as dependent to a certain extent on man's intellectual or moral activity and this implies that God in His relation to man is dependent to a certain extent on man. As such, natural theology is an attack on the sovereignty

of God, and what it gives man is not God but an idol. The result is that it can give us no certainty. Every natural argument for God is infected by uncertainty. It may be an illusion, the work of demons as the older theologians taught, or of inherent natural tendencies as the newer psychologists, from Feuerbach onwards, have asserted. Nor is the God of natural theology able to give the religious certainty which man requires for peace of heart and mind. This is to be rejected. God is alone able to make Himself known, that is, by revelation. God alone can deliver men from their sins and give them certainty and peace. Both revelation and salvation transcend the powers of human nature. They are matters of faith and presuppose that man is laid hold on by God and dependent on an activity of God which is wholly beyond all the possibilities of man's own nature. In defending itself against this attack natural theology points to that aspect of man's nature, distinguishing him from the rest of creation, which is called in the old tradition, "the image of God." Since man is in some sense akin to God he must be able to have some idea of God by analogy.

To this Barth replies that the image of God is an eschatological concept and that sin makes it impossible for us to draw any valid conclusions about God from our own nature and the idea of creation in general. Natural theology is not rejected on the ground that human nature and the world in general is incapable of revealing God. As God's creation they have

this possibility but the possibility never can become reality because sin has effectually blinded man's eyes and distorted his life. It is, therefore, impossible to derive any laws of natural justice, of political or social order, from the doctrine of creation. We do not know by nature the divine order of life; neither family nor nation, neither totalitarianism nor democracy are orders of creation. They are but human possibilities, and no natural theology is able to give them the validity of divine commandments.

In turn natural theology points to the fact it is man who receives revelation and asks the question, how it is possible, that revelation is received by man if it transcends man entirely? Does not the fact that man alone is capable of receiving revelation imply that he has a certain capacity for the knowledge of God? Barth agrees that man is man and not a cat, but he denies that this difference implies any natural knowledge of God by man. But, reply the natural theologians, the fact that revelation must be received by the human mind if it is to be a revelation to man surely indicates that the human mind must have an element of identity with the truth which is communicated by revelation. The mind cannot receive something which is entirely strange to it. An utterly strange element would not be understood and revelation according to Scripture is not an irrational element but an event of the utmost relevance for our knowledge and life. This

statement is true not only for the individual human mind but also for human history. Revelation could not be an event in human history if it were entirely strange to history; it could not be connected with the past and the future as it is according to the New Testament; it would remain a foreign body in history unperceivable and ununderstandable, having neither causes nor consequences.

To this Barth replies that revelation while it occurs in the human mind and in human history, does so in a way which transcends them both. Man can receive revelation only in so far as he has become a new creature. It is not human nature but the Holy Spirit bestowed by God which receives the revelation.

Against this rigid transcendentalism natural theology protests that according to St. Paul, the Holy Spirit beareth witness to our spirit and consequently that our spirit must be able to perceive this witness.

There is in religion an incurable dualism, God and the soul being apprehended as standing over against one another as independent wills. Only so can a truly personal relationship exist. At the same time the religious mind finds no enduring satisfaction or certainty in any ultimate dualism, but is constrained to attribute all to God. In Him all things live and move and have their being; from Him, and Him alone, comes that revelation of Himself for which man can only pray with empty

hands; to Him, and Him alone, man looks for salvation, knowing that he can neither save himself nor give any effective assistance in the process. The sovereignty of God in revelation and salvation must be absolute and not blended with any form of human existence or action. Yet the paradox remains; all is of God, His divine sovereignty is not blended with any form of human existence and action, yet human personalities have a measure of apartness from and independence of God. Revelation is entirely God's work, yet it is man who receives it. This "paradox of the 'impossible possibility' is an impossibility from the standpoint of men but it is a possibility from the standpoint of God. And it is not only a possibility but is also a reality. For only as it has become a reality can we speak of it as a possibility. Theology is the methodical form of speaking of the human impossibility, and of the divine possibility, which has become reality." (1)

Against the ever recurring threat of dissolution, either by assertion of the complete discontinuity of the divine and the human, or by assertion of their continuity, it is the task of theology to maintain this paradox. The Arian and Pelagian controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries; the debates concerning the doctrine of the atonement in the eleventh to sixteenth centuries and the Protestant Reformation over the

(1) P. Tillich. What is wrong with the "Dialectical" Theology. Journal of Religion. Vol. XV. 137.

question of justification by faith were all aspects of the same fundamental theological concern for this paradox. (2) The present controversy, as we have seen, is the outcome of a further dissolution of the paradox in a doctrine of continuity which, with the strongest scientific and philosophic support, has resulted in the relativistic humanism of Liberal Protestant Modernism. What are the results of this latest phase of the controversy?

2. Only Tentative Results Yet.

In a sense it is still too early to talk of results in anything but a tentative way. The immediate dispute between Barth and Brunner, which began about 1929 and reached its climax with the publication of "Natur und Gnade" and "Nein!" in 1934, has largely spent itself but the debate on the issues raised continues. "In the present stage of the discussion all contributions must be tentative and preliminary, because as our eyes have become sharpened again for the unique and sui generis character of the realm of revelation and salvation, we must learn to talk in a new way about the realm of fallen creation (nature and reason) - that is to say, in a deeper, more realistic, freer way than has been the case in the past." (3) With that proviso in mind we may turn to summing up the results of the present debate.

(2) see J. Orr. The Progress of Dogma.

(3) H. Kraemer. The Christian Message. 121.

3. Old Conception of Natural Theology Untenable.

One thing the controversy has done is to show clearly that the old conception of natural theology is no longer tenable. Until quite recently few things seemed clearer and more satisfactory than the distinction between natural and revealed theology. God, it was held, had endowed man with the power of reason and by the exercise of this reason there were many things which man had been able to find out about God. At a later time, however, God had added to the knowledge so won by man's own efforts certain other truths concerning Himself which man could not possibly have discovered for himself. These two kinds of knowledge of God had a certain relation to one another; natural theology constituted the substructure on which was raised the superstructure of revelation. This is no longer an acceptable view of the nature of our knowledge of God. "I think," says Paul Tillich, "that the criticism of Karl Barth which agrees "with the prophetic criticism of human religion and the catastrophe "of humanistic Christianity in Germany, have shown the impossibility of this scheme for Christian theology. We have to seek "a new way in order to save the truth implied in the old natural "theology." (4)

(4) P. Tillich. Natural and Revealed Religion. Christendom Vol. I. 166.

4. "General" and "special" Revelation.

The expansion of Christian missionary enterprise in the nineteenth century led to a closer study of the great heathen religions and a deeper appreciation of their merits. The attitude of the missionary to the native faiths underwent a profound change. From an intolerant opposition to what was despised as a tissue^{of} falsehood and evil it passed to one of tolerant appreciation of what came to be regarded as stages in the religious pilgrimage of mankind. God had nowhere left men without some revelation concerning Himself a revelation that had everywhere been adapted to man's condition and his capacity to receive it. Against the background of this "general revelation" stood the "special revelation" given to man in Christianity. The relation of this special revelation to the general is sufficiently indicated by the title of a typical book of the period which referred to Christianity as "The Crown of Hinduism". (5) The present controversy has effectively shattered the evolutionary optimism of this view and made it impossible to speak of a general revelation in this sense. Our eyes have been opened afresh to the unique nature of the revelation of God given in Jesus Christ and we cannot go on calling the religious and moral achievements of mankind, however lofty and sublime they may be according to human standards, revelations of the same sort and

(5) J.N. Farquhar. London. 1913.

quality as the revelation in Jesus Christ, though differing from it in degree. "The way in which this special revelation in "Christ contradicts and upsets all human religious aspiration "and imagination is an indirect indication of its special and "sui generis quality and significance. The protest which all "philosophies and religions have raised, raised and will raise "against the cardinal elements of the Christian faith demonstrates "that the God of the philosophers and the scholars, however lofty "their conception may be, is not the God and Father of Jesus "Christ, as Pascal said." (6)

5. The Distinction between Revelation and Discovery.

The controversy has also sharpened our perception of the distinction between revelation and discovery. This had become so obscured that the writer of the article on "Revelation" in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics could say "no valid distinction can be drawn between discovery and revelation." (7) In modern Protestant usage the two words came to connote two aspects of the same event and of these discovery was undoubtedly the more important. This can be illustrated by a quotation from an able statement of this standpoint. The writer represents the whole process of religion as one of progressive discovery, under the guiding principle of faith. But religion stands for a dual

(6) H. Kraemer. Op. cit. 122.

(7) H.L. Goudge. E.R.E. 10. 746.

relationship, and to the activities of faith and discovery, which are essentially activities of the human soul, there must correspond Divine activities, and so in the closing chapter he says; "the reflection of our race has never contented itself with describing the religious relationship merely as it appears on its manward side, but has always gone on to some kind of representation of its Godward aspect too. To our human activity of faith there has also seemed to correspond a divine activity of grace; and to our human activity of discovery a divine activity of self-disclosure which has been given the name of Revelation." (8)

It is, of course, true that a revelation, in order to be received, must be actively attended to, and no truly religious mind can ever forget that God is to be sought with the whole heart. But revelation, in the Biblical sense of the word, as we have seen from the foregoing pages, is not merely the divine response to man's activity but an activity of the divine grace in which something is disclosed to man which he could never have discovered. The religious man, when he comes to be aware of God's living presence, does not feel that he has found or stumbled upon God, as he does other objects of knowledge; rather he apprehends God as actively drawing near to him and entering, of His own initiative, into his personal life in a way which transforms. This two-fold sense of a personal relationship and of a knowledge beyond man's

(8) John Baillie. The Interpretation of Religion. 448.

capacity to reach effectively distinguishes the two activities of revelation and discovery.

6. Revelation a Personal Relationship.

This recognition of the personal relationship in revelation indicates another point which has become clearer. Revelation was commonly regarded as the disclosure of certain truths concerning God or the universe or immortality or the way of duty. Once disclosed they could be apprehended by man and become, as it were, part of his property of ideas. As such he could hand them on to others. It is now seen that the essential content of revelation is not truths about God and the world, but God Himself. Faith is therefore not an intellectual assent to certain truths but a personal relationship with God initiated and sustained by Him. Being a personal relationship revelation is never given into our hands but is always dependent on God's willingness to reveal Himself. Consequently, we never possess it as such a fashion that we can hand it on to others. All we can do is to bear witness to its reality as an event and thus point others to the source from which it comes.

7. Revelation and Reason.

Some light has also been thrown on the age-long discussion of the relation between reason and revelation. Both Barth and Brunner reject the idea of an autonomous human reason which is

able of itself to apprehend the Divine, and one clear gain from this discussion is that this matter has been set out quite plainly and unmistakably. Barth does not reject the Cartesian method, with its proofs of God from man's certainty of himself, because he has a better philosophy. "We are not in the least interested" he says, "to know whether there is such a thing". He does so because God's Word is not known by man's reason but by God's grace. "Men can know the Word of God because and so far as God wills that they should know it, because and so far as over against the will of God there is only the weakness of disobedience, and because and so far as there is a revelation of the will of God in His Word in which this weakness of disobedience is removed." (9) Reason is rejected not because it is specially corrupt and fallible but simply because it shares the weakness of all "anthropological centres" - feeling, conscience and will as well - and is to be disregarded as a possible point of contact for experience of the Word of God. (10) Brunner is no less emphatic in his rejection of the claims of autonomous reason. "As all natural human action reveals the sinful heart, so all philosophical speculation, when left to itself, bears witness to the obscuration in the inmost recesses of our reason. For this cause it is impossible to build up the Christian proclamation of the Gospel and its theology on the basis of a philosophical doctrine of God." (11)

(9) Dogmatic I.1. 224.

(10) *ibid.* 231.

(11) *God and Man* (Eng. Tr.) 40.

While Brunner agrees with Barth that human reason cannot of itself know God he does not follow Barth in his virtual rejection of reason as the organ of revelation. Brunner regards the reasonable nature of man as the point of contact for God's Word "When the word of the Gospel, through its proclamation, approaches the sinner, his life is apprehended by God in the following order: first of all, his outward presence and the external act of hearing, the act of understanding, in the logical and grammatical sense, then his rational and personal being, above all its centre, the knowledge of responsibility." (12)

Running through all Brunner has to say on this subject the word reason is used in two senses which approximate to those I first learned to distinguish from A.D. Lindsay's lectures on Plato. The Greeks distinguished two aspects of reason which they called *νοῦς* and *διάνοια* respectively. *Νοῦς* was man's whole personality considered as functioning self-consciously in its highest awareness of the world. By *διάνοια* they meant reason in the narrower sense of reasoning powers, the ratiocinative processes which, functioning through logical and cause-effect relationships, enable us to order the material presented through the senses. It is a distinction which is clearly recognisable though not easily defined in actual life. Some men seem to be more generously endowed with *νοῦς* than others. They have a

(12) M.i.R. 536 f.

balance and a wholesomeness in their outlook and one feels one can trust their judgment. It is, however, a quality which all possess in some measure and which can be developed. Canon Peter Green considers the development of this quality of character as the chief result of Bible reading. "It would not be difficult for me to name a large number of men of elementary school education, with whom I have worked during the last forty years, all of whom have displayed a remarkable growth in spiritual power and a special flavour, so to speak, in the character of their religion. They have all been eager Bible readers." (13) This is something distinct from intellectual acuteness or reasoning power in the narrower sense, a wisdom which is less a product of man's mind than a gift to him who humbly opens his mind to receive it. A similar distinction is made by Brunner who rejects, as strongly as Barth does, the idea that the autonomous human reason can of itself apprehend the Divine. But Brunner recognises that the fault lies not in reason itself but in its false independence of God, the one source of wisdom. In revelation reason still operates. "Only that which has been thought in accordance with law, with a norm, has been actually thought. Behind the moral law of reason there stands logic. Without a logical law there is also no moral reason. Even theological thought is logical thought, or it would not be thought but mere

(13) Peter Green. The Christian Man. 108.

"babble. Indeed, even prayer comes under this rule of law. It too is rational speech with God, just as faith is a rational answer to the Word of God. But the logical element is here in the service of another; it is not 'something said to oneself' but 'allowing something to be said to oneself.' In faith the monologue of thinking confined within the self is interrupted by hearing the Word from beyond ourselves; faith clings to the belief that the truth which is said to me is said to me by God, really said, and not invented by me. The truth of faith, therefore, in contradistinction to the truth of reason, is 'truth which is imparted', 'from above', not 'from within'. Here in faith, therefore, the turning from the law to grace is achieved. Faith is the reason which is opened to that which lies beyond reason." (14)

8. Questions which Raise the Problem of Natural Theology.

This brings us to the questions which, despite the most stringent view of revelation, raise the problem of natural theology.

a. The Fact of Understanding.

The fact that a man can understand Christian preaching and hear in it a call to repentance and faith shows there is some measure of continuity between the old man and the new. This is true even where his life is shattered and renewed since a thing

(14) M.I.R. 246-7. The whole section - Chapter X. The Human Spirit and the Human Reason - is important for Brunner's views on this point.

can only be understood when it is brought into relation with what is already known. To deny this is to turn the work of the Holy Spirit into a magical event.

This does not mean that man has an 'organ' for the divine in himself or anything which will constitute a point of contact. Faith and unbelief are not qualities attached to this or that organ of man's life; they are modes of existence which each permeate the whole being. Where, therefore, revelation is received and faith takes the place of unbelief it involves not the addition of something new to life but a new understanding of self, and a transformation of the whole being. I find myself in full agreement with Barth when he maintains that in this process it is the Grace of God revealing Himself in His Word which initiates, completes and sustains the whole and that there is no complementary activity required on our side. Yet the process does not take place *ex opere operato* but through the acceptance of the revelation which meets a felt need. It is this aspect of the process which, according to Brunner, calls for a natural theology. As I have already indicated, I do not think Brunner's own solution is satisfactory. At the same time I believe he is right in maintaining against Barth that there is here a problem which calls for the most thorough theological work, and that besides the central task of theology, that of giving suitable expression to the revelation given through the Word of God and guarding it from heretical tendencies, there is "another task", that of apologetic.

Barth's denial of this will, I believe, ultimately be found untenable.

b. The same is true when we turn to consider the phenomenon of religion. Barth is right when he classifies all non-Christian religion as unbelief. When a man has heard God speak to him and claim him in Jesus Christ he cannot but realise that when other religions speak of God it is not the one true God of whom they speak. Yet the question remains why they claim to speak about God? What is spoken of when apart from faith men speak of God? Is it demons or a devil? Perhaps, but that is not their intention. Is it an illusion, the projection on the infinite of man's wishes and desires? In part, no doubt, it is yet plainly more is intended since no man would continue to worship an illusion. Though man outside faith cannot speak of God because he cannot know Him he intends to speak about God and thinks he knows Him. Therefore the relation of Christian faith and non-Christian religions is not adequately described by the simple antithesis faith and unbelief. Here again I am neither satisfied with Brunner's suggested solution nor yet with Barth's refusal to consider it. This, too, calls for further study.

c. The same question is raised from other quarters, especially those of ethics and philosophy, and here, too, I find myself in agreement with Kraemer, when he maintains, against Barth, that an endeavour must be made, however great the dangers, to speak

of the relation of these aspects of man's life in the world to Christian faith. "It seems that the problem of synergism versus monergism does not have in the sphere of Biblical realism, with its indissoluble unity of faith and ethics, that strained aspect which it often has in theology. Faith is ethics and ethics are faith, because both are rooted in and sustained by divine grace. The universal religious consciousness of man and the results of his endeavour to obtain an apprehension of the totality of existence cannot be dismissed as outside discussion. The testimony of the Bible in the Acts and the Epistles breathes a freer, more human, more positive spirit, despite its uncompromising attitude towards the world. The perception of Divinity (*sensus divinitatis*) operative in mankind, asserted by Calvin, is in the religious realism of the Bible no object of discussion, but a working hypothesis that goes without saying. Here lie the necessity and legitimacy of Brunner's protest, and of his combat in favour of a critical and right kind of natural theology; for, although beset with many possibilities of error, we must somehow try to talk about it. Vital and genuine faith is in the long run more endangered by a too-exclusive concentration on 'pure doctrine' than by the inescapable endeavour, however subject to error, to try to speak in the light of the revelation in Christ about the religious reality of man outside the sphere of 'special revelation!'"(15)

(15) H. Kraemer. *op. cit.* 121.

9. The Nature and Place of a True Natural Theology.

These last words point to what appears to me to be the main gain from this controversy viz. the perception that a true natural theology can only be carried on inside the Christian faith, "in the light of the revelation in Christ." That there is a revelation of God in nature, man and history is the unambiguous testimony of Scripture. Equally unambiguous is its testimony that fallen man everywhere and always fails to recognise this revelation in its true character, and instead of acknowledging God and giving Him due Glory and thanks he usurps the place of God. Only in Jesus Christ is the entail of sin broken and only in the revelation given in and through Him does man come to know himself and the world as they truly are. Natural theology, therefore, is not an account of the knowledge of God which man has by the light of nature and which is either preliminary or complementary to the knowledge of God given in Christ. It is rather the interpretation of the life of the natural man, with its religious and ethical strivings, its superstitions and idols, in the light which falls upon it from the divine self-revelation in Christ. As such it can only be carried on within the sphere of Christian dogmatics but it is a legitimate and necessary part of that discipline as it was with St. Paul and the Reformers.

APPENDIX I.

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF THE IMAGO DEI.

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1. Any interpretation which is to do justice to the biblical doctrine must start with the God whose image man is said to be. "God is a Spirit" said Jesus to the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well at Sychar (John 4. 24) thereby giving utterance to the deep truth that God is free and self-determining, essentially ethical in His nature. This great idea is the basal conception on which the interpretation of man as made in God's image, as set forth in Scripture, must proceed. For, if God is a Spirit, then man, reflecting Him, must be spirit too; in other words, human nature has more in it than what we find in sensuous experiences, animal propensities, and fleshy inclinations ... The foundation of his being is deeper than anything that may be seen or tasted or handled: it is found in relation to the unseen and eternal." (1). According to the creation narratives man is a spirit having the breath of life, which makes him a living soul, breathed into him by God himself. This gives us the key to the interpretation of the phrase "image of God" which, in Gen. 1. 27, the first and most important passage where it occurs, is not defined. Whether this may refer to the outward form, or to the inward intellectual or spiritual endowment, or to man's superiority over the rest of creation, is a

(1) W. L. Davidson. Image of God. E.R.E. 7. 160-1.

secondary and unimportant consideration. The essential significance of the term is that man is "a creature whose being is not "derived from below, but has his origin from above." (2) "The "divine likeness in man means, therefore, not a special act, not "something extraordinary in man, but the generality of the statements in Genesis 1, 26-27 leads us to understand the divine "likeness as a correspondence between Himself and the whole man "given by God at the creation." (3)

2. Further clarification of the expression 'the image of God' is not to be reached by free speculation concerning the nature of this relationship, since "no man hath seen God at any time" and uncontrolled speculation must be futile. "We must come to a "clear understanding of the term 'image of God' not through "speculation over the deeper meaning of this mysterious expression in the creation story, but by reflection on what is said to "us in Jesus Christ about our origin. Not the Old Testament "narrative as such, but its meaning as fulfilled in Jesus Christ "is the 'Word of God' in which alone we can understand ourselves." (4) In the New Testament it is not Adam, but Christ, who is set forth as the true image of God. (5)

(2) von Rad. Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament. Band II. 389.

(3) E. Schlück. M.V.K. 183. cf. O. Weber. Bemerkungen zur Frage Der "Imago Dei". Deutsche Theologie. 1936. 22.

(4) M.I.W. 73.

(5) II Corinthians iv. 4. Colossians i. 15. I Corinthians xv. 45-49.

3. So far as man is concerned the presupposition of the New Testament is that he has lost the image of God. "All", said St. Paul at the close of his survey of the Gentile and Jewish world, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (6) The object of the reconciliation and redemption which is offered to man in and through Jesus Christ is the renewal of the image of God in man. It's aim is that "we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory". (7) The other passages which speak of the renewal of the 'imago' - Rom.viii. 29, Col.iii, 10, and the corresponding passages which exhort to put on Christ - Rom. xiii, 14, Gal.iii, 27, or the 'new man' - Eph.iv, 24 - all point to the same conclusion. The regaining of the lost likeness to God which corresponds to the creation is identical with the restoration of fellowship with God through Christ.

4. Alongside the main stream of New Testament teaching, which presupposes the entire loss of the 'imago' and agrees with Genesis iii in regarding sin not as a moral lack but as an event which transforms our nature and our relation to God, there is another, in both Old Testament and New Testament, which seems to speak of sinful man still being in God's image. The passages in question are Genesis v, 1,3, ix, 6, I Corinthians xi,7 and James iii, 9 and their interpretation in relation to the other passages already mentioned constitutes the central problem of the Imago Dei.

(6) Romans iii. 23

(7) II Corinthians iii. 18.

5. One answer which has played a great part in the Christian interpretation of man is that the imago is partly lost through the Fall, but a part still remains as man's abiding possession. This is done by help of the distinction, first made by Ireneans, between the image (ὁμοίωσις: εἰκὼν: imago) and the likeness (ἁπομίμησης: similitudo). The imago Dei is a natural and permanent endowment which has survived the Fall. This is variously interpreted as consisting of man's physical nature, the indestructible immortal soul, the spiritual nature, freedom of the will, superiority to the animals, and so on. The similitudo Dei is man's supernatural likeness to God in which he was originally created. This was lost at the Fall and is only restored through the divine gift of grace in Jesus Christ. This is the orthodox Roman Catholic and, with certain differences which don't concern us here, Greek Orthodox doctrine.

This is exegetically unsound since ὁμοίωσις and ἁπομίμησης are synonymous terms and provide no basis for such a division. It also contradicts the whole sense of scripture. "Even though Scripture does not deny "that in man certain formal, common features, e.g. the dissimilarity "of the sexes and the distinction from the animals, remain before "and after the Fall, it is not these common features but repentance "and the kingdom of God and with that the loss of the image of God "through guilt and its recovery through grace that are the content "of the message." (8). It further leads to a doctrine of redemption

(8) Schlunk M.V.K. 186.

which consists not in a new creation (9) but in a change in the 'old man'. This leads of necessity to the position *gratia non tollit naturam, sed perficit*.

6. Some of the passages which appear to support the view that the 'imago' exists in man after the Fall only do so through misinterpretation.

Genesis v. 1,3. Here verse 1 only repeats Genesis 1, 26. Verse 3 says that Adam begat a son in his (Adam's) own likeness, after his (Adam's) image. That this must also have been in the image of God depends on the assumption that in Adam the imago was still intact and was capable of being transmitted by inheritance. It cannot be taken as a proof of the imago's survival of the Fall and its perpetuation through the human race. (10).

I Corinthians xi, 7. This is part of St. Paul's objection to women appearing in church uncovered and is based on a rabbinic interpretation of the order of creation. The covering of the head signified subjection and therefore was only appropriate to women. This depends on the interpretation of the second creation story. With it St. Paul combines the idea that man's supremacy comes from his being made in the likeness of God, ignoring the fact that in the first account of creation from which this comes, it refers to both

(9) John iii. 3. II Corinthians v. 17.

(10) Schlunk. M.V.K. 182 Note 10.

sexes. This bit of special pleading lessens the value of this passage as an indication of St. Paul's doctrine of the imago. The most probable interpretation is that adopted by Moffatt. "As Calvin and Bengel saw 'is' means 'represents' (as in xi, 25). A male being exhibits on earth the divine authority and dominion" (11) "the 'is' means not identity but equivalence". (12).

7. The interpretation of Genesis ix,6 and James iii,9 raises problems of a different kind.

We saw that according to the main stream of New Testament teaching the imago is restored to us through the re-establishment of fellowship with God in Jesus Christ. This, we believe, is no accident but part of the predeterminate counsel and purpose of God. The Fall, which on man's side entailed a break with God and the loss of that relationship which is the basis of the imago, was not the end of the Bible. God did not then cease to care for the creature He had made for fellowship with Himself or to claim him as His own. With the Fall began the work of redemption. Luther connects this thought especially with Genesis iii,20 in sharp contrast to the curse. He uses the power bestowed upon him to give his wife a name. "Moreover it is the name which Adam gives to his wife, a very happy and pleasant name. For what is more precious, better or more delightful than life? ... But it is clear that from this time, Adam, having received the Holy Spirit, was illumined in a wonderful way, and believed and understood

(11) J. Moffatt. I Corinthians. (Moffatt New Testament Commentary) 151.

(12) *ibid.* 168.

ne word about the seed of the woman destroying the head of the serpent, and also wished to mark this faith of his and to honour it with the name of his wife ... so that by this naming of his wife, he might foster the hope of a future seed ... because he believed in life even then, when his whole nature was already subject to death." (13).

We may reject this as exegetically unsatisfactory but we cannot reject the consistent testimony of the Old Testament that God has not left man to himself in misery and sin but is ever seeking his redemption.

The sign and token of this redemptive activity is the Law, which is God's gracious gift to His people. "Behold I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me "Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. "For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? "And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day." (14)

This law is based upon God's nature and it claims men for likeness to God "Speak unto .. the children of Israel, and say unto them, "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy." (15).

(13) Luther W.A. 42: 164: 11. Quoted by O. Weber. Deutsche Theologie

(14) Deuteronomy iv. 5-8 cf. Psalm cxix. 1936. 28.

(15) Leviticus xix. 2. cf. xi. 44, xx, 7.

The decalogue makes the same kind of claim. "I am the Lord thy God ... "Thou shalt." Thus even fallen man belongs to God and God still treats him as one created in His own image and the aim of the law is to restore the lost likeness by bringing men back into that relationship of obedience and righteousness which is its essence.

This gives us the needed key to the interpretation of Genesis ix, 6 "Who so sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for "in the image of God made he man", and James iii,9 "Therewith bless "we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are "made after the similitude of God." In both cases it is not asserted that man is in possession of the image but that his origin is in likeness to God. No judgment is made about man here on the basis of any empirical or rational facts, but with reference to man's original creation by God. This original likeness is for God the basis of his work of redemption, which begins with the Law, and it is the ground on which He calls men to respect the life He has given to others. Both the demands made in these passages belong to the Law which calls men back to the lost likeness to God. "According to "the Scripture passages mentioned the likeness of fallen man to God "does not exist in man himself but in God's thought about man, in "His remembrance of the act of creation, and in His aim in the new creation towards which He presses man through His law. Accordingly "the demand for likeness to God is also contained in the summary of Jesus' exposition of the Law in the Sermon on the Mount: 'Be ye

"'therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is
 "'perfect.'" (16). This is also the conclusion of a much earlier
 writer whose work, despite many signs of its age, is still worthy
 of study. "Scripture nowhere says that fallen man possesses the
 "image of God still in living reality: it places the dignity of
 "man as he is now, only in the fact that he is created after the
 "image of God." Genesis ix. 6. James iii. 9. (17)

Only in obedience to the will of God revealed in His Law can
 the divine image, lost through disobedience, be recovered. But to
 do this is beyond the powers of fallen man. (18). The law only
 makes the more clear to man his lost condition. (19).

8. Since the Fall the 'Image of God' is no longer a reality in
 human life but lives only in the demand of the Law. For no man
 has kept the Law, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of
 "God." But God's redemptive purpose is not thereby frustrated.
 "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that
 "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting
 "life". In Jesus Christ every demand of the Law is met, and in
 Him the 'image of God' is again a reality. He is the 'image of God'.(20).
 In Him God draws near to fallen man freely offering him the restoration
 of that relationship of obedience and service which is at once the

(16) Schlink M.V.K. 189. cf. Weber. op.cit. 27-29.

(17) Fr Delitzsch. A System of Biblical Psychology, Eng.Tr.1867. 85.

(18) Romans vii. 21-24.

(19) Romans vii. 7-10.

(20) II Corinthians iv. 4. Colossians i. 15.

demand of the Law and the essence of the 'imago Dei'. This is the good news of the Gospel. In Christ there is offered to man that which he cannot achieve of himself. Christ is the fulfilment of the Law and the gift of God's grace.

The question of the 'imago Dei', therefore, can only be satisfactorily answered when it is brought into relation to the decisive Biblical doctrine of justification by faith.

The essence of the Gospel is that through faith in Christ men are restored to that relationship of God which was lost at the Fall. The believer receives that 'righteousness which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God on faith.' (21). On the basis of this righteousness which has its origin in the 'righteous act' of Christ, and comes to the believer as a 'gift' (22), he that believes in Christ is justified in God's sight. He becomes by grace a 'new creature' (23) and this 'new man' is one who is 'after the image of him that created him.' (24).

Justification by faith and restoration of the 'imago' are correlative terms.

This means that the 'image of God' is not an inherent possession, capacity or potentiality of man but always the gift of God through the Holy Spirit. "The sayings, 'God has made us for Himself' and "'man made in the image of God' are not to be taken as meaning an

(21) Philippians iii, 9, cf. Romans iii, 22; iv, 11; ix, 30; x, 3.10
II Corinthians v. 21.

(22) Romans v. 17-19.

(23) II Corinthians v. 17.

(24) Colossians iii. 10.

"abiding and sure fact of revelation that we have once and for all
 "made our own, but it is a process of revelation, which, in the
 "strictist sense, is first coming to us and to come, moment by
 "moment, if, as we should, we have taken seriously what is meant by
 "the Deity of the Creator Spirit. Then revelation is to be under-
 "stood as the occurrence of the Creator Spirit's coming to us in the
 "future, of Him-who-exists-for-us, and so it is not a datum but a
 "dandum, not as fulfilment but as promise. Grace is our having
 "been created, but it is also 'created for God'. But grace is
 "ever and in all relations God's deed and act, taking place in this
 "and that moment of time in which God wills to be gracious to us,
 "and is gracious, and makes His grace manifest. It is never at
 "all a quality of ours, inborn in us, such as would enable us to
 "know of it in advance." (25).

Is then the 'imago Dei' restored in the believer here and now?
 This question is answered by St. John "Beloved, now are we the children
 "of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know
 "that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him because we shall
 "see Him as He is." (26). Commenting on this Westcott remarks
 "'Yes, now are we children, children with the promise of mature
 "'development.' The change to which he thus looks forward will
 "not be in the position of children, but in the conditions under
 "which the relation will be shewn. The Christian has now even in

(25) Barth. The Holy Ghost and the Christian Life. 15-18.

(26) I John iii. 2.

"the present life, that which carries with it potentially infinite blessings, but the manifestation of his sonship is hindered by the circumstances in which he is placed. He will not be anything essentially different hereafter, but he will be what he is now essentially more completely, though in ways wholly beyond our powers of imagination." (27).

The image of God is a reality in the midst of this world which is estranged from Him, but a reality which will only be truly known in the future. "The imago (εἰκών) too - like all the gifts that fall to the Christian's share - is a first-fruits (ἀπαρχή); but that means that it is already there and yet that it will sometime be, that it is at the same time a thing we have but do not yet possess, that its eschatology has present power and that its present existence is eschatologically anchored." (28).

The life into which we have been brought through faith in Christ is a life 'hid with Christ in God' but it is a life in which we have put off the old man ... and put on the new man which is ever being renewed unto perfect knowledge after the pattern of the image of the Creator." (29).

Yet its present reality, which is not our possession but something 'ever being renewed', is only a hint of what shall be. For here we, "reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transfigured into the same image." (30).

In Romans viii, 29 and even more in I Cor. xv, 49 the eschatological aspect comes more strongly to the fore.

(27) B.F. Westcott. The Epistles of St. John. 95.

(28) G. Kittel. Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament II. 396.

(29) Colossians iii. 10.

(30) II Corinthians xv. 49.

APPENDIX II.

THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION.

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The idea of predestination plays an important role not only in the theology of Karl Barth but also in that of St. Paul, St. Augustine, and the Reformers, especially Calvin. It cannot, therefore, be set aside because it gives rise to theoretical difficulties through which we cannot force a clear path.

While in strict usage the idea of predestination is to be separated from that of election the two are very closely related. (1) In the form which we have to deal with here its use is indistinguishable from that of election and the two terms will be used interchangeably. (2)

Naturally this brief note makes no attempt to do more than touch on those aspects of the highly complicated theological problems involved in the doctrine of predestination which are essential to our present purpose.

The doctrine of predestination expresses ideas that are indispensable to Christian faith in face of two main problems.

(a) There is that presented by the dark and enigmatical elements in human life, which is so finely dealt with in the book of Job. Here the idea of predestination stands as a

(1) A.S. Martin. Election. E.R.E. Vol. 5. 256-261.

(2) A.S. Martin. Prodestination. E.R.E. Vol. 10. 225-235.

reminder that we are not in a position to judge God or to justify ourselves before Him. He who seeks to justify himself before God, or to defend the righteousness of God against those who accuse Him, is one who does not really stand before God and has not yet come to true faith in Him. Where man does stand in God's presence it is to acknowledge His unsearchable wisdom. (3) It is the same thought we find in St. Paul. (4) We cannot claim to fathom the ways of God. He is not only a God who reveals Himself through His dealings with men but also One who conceals Himself. The Deus revelatus is at the same time the Deus absconditus. We can only trust in this - that the God who hides Himself, whose ways we cannot understand, is none other than the God who reveals Himself. He who reveals Himself in Jesus Christ as our Father, whose purpose with us is a purpose of love, is the same even in the darkest mysteries of His providential dealings with us.

(b) In the second place, the idea of predestination is essential to a true understanding of the relationship of God and man. Wherever faith in God is found this is acknowledged to be the outcome of the divine election and call. "If you find two people living together in a happy marriage, the pre-supposition of that is that they have chosen each other."

(3) cf. Job XLII. 2-6.

(4) Romans IX. 20-21.

"Nothing else will explain the situation. Similarly, if you
 "find a man living in fellowship with God, the presupposition of
 "that is that the choosing will of God, with whom the initiative
 "in religion lies, has so operated as to call out in him an
 "answering, choosing faith." (5)

This thought finds classic expression in the Old Testament.
 "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee Fear not:
 "for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou
 "art mine." (6) The whole New Testament doctrine may be summed
 up in the words of Jesus "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen
 "you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit,
 "and that your fruit should remain." (7) This emphasis on the
 the divine initiative is indispensable to christian faith.
 Christian life means life lived wholly and solely by the un-
 merited grace of God. This cannot be recognised without going
 on to draw the inevitable conclusion. God's redeeming love is
 not something which came into existence with our recognition of
 it. Its origin is not in time at all, but in His eternal
 nature, and His choice of us as the objects of that redeeming
 love is no accident but part of his eternal purpose. "Thus the
 "doctrine of election is, so to say, an expression of our furth-
 "est reaching retrospect, from our present position, into the
 "eternal duration of the Father's grace." (8)

(5) H.R. Mackintosh. The Christian Apprehension of God. 221.

(6) Isaiah XLIII. 1.

(7) John XV. 16.

(8) Mackintosh. op. cit. 222.

In these respects the doctrine of predestination acts as a guard over that knowledge of God which belongs to true faith against sentimental humanising of the conception of God. It is a gospel and a corrective and not a dogma. It is a gospel, because the inevitable result of basing everything, past, present and future, in the omnipotent love and will of God, is a sense of liberation from fears concerning our own weakness and frailty, and an encouraging assurance of final victory "When we look back, "we see everywhere the tokens of His faithfulness; when we "look forward, it is with the certainty, that nothing yet to "confront us can wreck the Father's redeeming plan. Here is the "true doctrine of election at its work." (9) It is a corrective because its aim is to remind us that God is God in His unsearchable majesty, and man man in his weakness and limitations. As such it does not involve any weakening of man's responsibility. The divine election is God's word of invitation which calls me to respond to that love which He has for me. I have the responsibility of answering to that call. This finds its classic expression in the words of St. Paul "Work out your own salvation "with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (10) But the same thought is also found in the teaching of Jesus who at the same time as He said "Ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you"

(9) *ibid.* 226.

(10) *Philippians II.* 12-13.

addressed to His disciples the imperatives "Abide in me" and "keep my commandments."

This does not mean that these two, the divine call and man's response, stand on the same level and are equal partners in the work of salvation. The divine call, as we have already seen, is the source, the creative source, of all Christian faith and life. Yet the grace of God does not work magically or mechanically, but with a persuasive patience which leaves man's responsibility intact.

The sweet persuasion of His voice
Respects thy sanctity of will.
He giveth day: thou has thy choice
To walk in darkness still. (11)

The real difficulties arise when the doctrine of predestination is made into a dogma, instead of a gospel and a corrective, as is the case in Barth's theology. This is the consequence of his desire to establish dogma from a point beyond the actual event of revelation in the act of faith.

Predestination always tends to pass over into a doctrine of a double election. This means that God in His eternal decree had made a decision concerning all men, determining beforehand that this shall be a believer, that an unbeliever, this be brought into obedience to His will, that remain disobedient, this man be saved and that lost. However much Barth, in his exposition of the power of the Word of God to rule, may speak of

(11) J.G. Whittier. The Answer. Oxford Edition. 1904. 480.

the "abysmal inconceivability" of disobedience, such a doctrine inevitably results in the denial of responsibility. If the divine decision has already and irrevocably been made how can man's decision be interpreted as in any sense responsible? At the most all that is left to man is to decide to acknowledge the divine decision or not. But even that is saying too much, since this acknowledgment or non-acknowledgment is also covered by the primal divine decree.

More than that, the acknowledgment of this divine decision which has determined beforehand whether we are believers or unbelievers, obedient or disobedient must include the acknowledgment of the possibility at least that my own decision has already been pronounced unbelief and disobedience and that I am given over to damnation. Now if sin has any real meaning in theology it is that man's evil is a wrong done against God for which He may justly and righteously reject us. "Against thee, thee only, "have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou "mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when "thou judgest." (12) According to Barth this consciousness of sin presupposes the divine grace. "It is just God's previous "attitude towards him that will constitute his unbelief unbelief, "his sin sin. Only in the realm of grace, and there for the "first time, is there faith and unbelief, righteousness and sin." (13)

(12) Psalm LI. 4.

(13) Dogmatic I.1. 175.

Yet if the doctrine of predestination is here to be taken in earnest it means that the consciousness of guilt which the above Psalm expresses is not to be traced back to actions revealed by grace to be sins against God but to the sovereign displeasure of God Himself. This means that in the last analysis my sin is not the outcome of my decision against God but of God's decision against me. Thus sin becomes understood as fate, and this means the dissolution of the consciousness of sin and of the grace of God against which it is known for what it is.

This is the result of setting predestination in the centre and interpreting it not theologically but metaphysically. For here, in asserting a double election, Barth has left the sphere of theology proper and entered that of philosophical speculation.

Every theological doctrine should be based upon the revelation of God. That the God who reveals Himself is also a God who is hidden is not to be denied, but this hiddenness of God is to be understood as the dark background behind revelation and as such incapable of being made the subject of doctrine. (14)

(14) See Cullberg. *Das Problem der Ethik*. 100.
 Mackintosh. *The Christian Apprehension of God*. 221 ff.
 Barth. *The Knowledge of God*. 78.
 Camfield. *Revelation and the Holy Spirit*. 94 ff.

APPENDIX III.

THE PAULINE DOCTRINE OF THE LAW.

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One of Brunner's chief complaints against Barth is that the latter has failed to grasp the significance and importance of Paul's teaching about the Law, and that, therefore, much of the argument between Barth and himself is beside the point because they are using the same words with a different meaning. (1) What then does Paul mean when he speaks of the Law?

The basic significance of the word is not in doubt. "In Galatians the reference is mainly to what we should call law in its "ritual" aspect, for the claim made on the Christians of Galatia by "the Judaizers was that they should submit to be circumcised; in "Romans, on the other hand, it is the moral law which is the subject "of discussion. Yet this distinction is not one which would be "present, at least vividly, to St. Paul's mind. He thinks of the "law as one and as the law of God." (2) Similarly Professor Burton summarises an important study of the N.T. term Νόμος, appended to his commentary on Galatians, with the words "To Paul ὁ νόμος was, "save in exceptional cases, the revealed will of God, and the primary "reference of the term was to the revelation of that will in the "O.T." (3)

(1) M.I.R. 516 ff.

(2) J. Denney. Law (in New Testament). H.D.B. iii. 77b.

(3) E.D. Burton. Galatians (International Critical Commentary).
455.

Nevertheless, as any careful study of the Pauline doctrine of the law shows, complications and ambiguities abound. A suggestive path has been traced through these by Professor Maurice Goguel at a conference on "L'Evangile et la Loi" reported in the *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie religieuses*. (4) To Goguel's contribution, along with the main address by M. Fernand Ménégoz, I am much indebted for help in the clarification of my thoughts at this point.

Professor Goguel suggests that many of the ambiguities in St. Paul's use of the term law are due to two causes. The terminology at Paul's disposal was insufficient to express his experience and his Jewish pre-conceptions hindered its reform. The term νόμος means two quite different things. On the one hand the law means the whole code of prescriptions which were embodied in Jewish ritual. In the keeping of these lay man's hope of salvation. The outcome of the experiences through which Paul came to the Christian faith was the renunciation of this Jewish view of the way of salvation. For him now salvation depended on Christ alone and therefore the prescriptions of the Law had no validity for the Christian. Nevertheless, his views on Scripture, his upbringing and Jewish traditions prevented him thinking that the law was merely human and contingent. The Law came from God and if it was no longer valid for Christians the reason must be that it was only intended to have a provisional

(4) 1937. 1-57.

character. Now that Christ was come, according to the Divine promise, the dispensation of the Law has been brought to a close. (5) On the other hand Paul also discerned another strain in the Old Testament Scriptures, a prophetic strain in which the Law was more inward and spiritual, being the expression of a moral ideal given by God and based on His eternal nature and His purpose for man. (6)

While Paul recognised these two aspects of the Law he never succeeded in making a clear distinction between them. This may be seen from his argument in I Corinthians, ix, 20-21. "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ), that I might gain them that are without law." Thus Paul is not *νόμος* but neither is he *ἐκ νόμου* since he is *ἐν νόμῳ Χριστοῦ*. Here the tradition of the Law as a whole coming directly from God creates difficulties for him since it prevents him making the distinctions in the law which his experience and thought require.

A clearer understanding of Paul's doctrine is to be gained from a consideration of the circumstances under which it was formed.

Paul's thought is an adaption of Jewish thought to the conviction that Jesus is the Messiah and Saviour. His main problem

(5) Romans x, 4. cf. Denney. op. cit. 79a.

(6) C.H. Dodd. Romans (Moffatt New Testament Commentary). 50, 63-4, 165.

as a Christian, no less than as a Jew, was that of salvation. As a Jew Paul's solution of the problem was, God will have mercy on His elect who have tried to keep the Law and been absolved from involuntary transgressions through the sacrificial system. As a Christian he realises that faith in Christ is the one indispensable condition of salvation. His conversion raised another problem which didn't exist for Judaism, the problem of sanctification, i.e. the problem of the relations between religion and morality, between the Gospel and the Law. This problem didn't exist for Judaism since the redemptive act, the intervention of the Messiah, came at the end of time when the world of the flesh was destroyed and that of the spirit brought in. Here sanctification and redemption are one and the same act. As a Christian Paul recognised two stages in the experience of salvation. First, that of justification which is coincident with that of faith in Christ, then that of redemption which will not be accomplished until the present order of life is brought to a close either for the individual or for all. Between these two there is an organic bond of the same nature as that between the Resurrection and the Second Coming. What, then, of the Christian who is living "between the times", justified yet not redeemed, dead to the flesh and to sin, yet still living in the flesh and liable to sin, a spiritual being yet having only the earnest of the Spirit and not entire possession? The formative influence on Paul's thought here is what M. Goguel calls the moral revolution wrought by Jesus, of which we have a record in Chapter v of St. Matthew's Gospel.

"One cannot, in my opinion, lay too much stress on the fundamental importance of the ideas expressed in Matthew v, 17-48." (7)

The attitude to the Law which is set forth there is neither its abrogation nor its fulfilment. Not its abrogation since, on the contrary, man's obligation to fulfil the will of God is no longer limited to acts, as it was in Jewish legalism, but is extended to the secret thoughts and desires of the heart. At the same time the idea of the will of God is enlarged to include not only that which is given in the Mosaic Law but also all perfection. (8) This presupposes the idea of a God who reveals Himself not in an external law but in the heart of His children and implies therefore a transformation of the relation between God and man. The morality, of which the principles are laid down in the Sermon on the Mount has, therefore, a religious basis. There is no abrogation of the Law nor, in Jesus' ethics, is there a demand for the fulfilment of the Law in the old legalistic sense. The relation of God to man which He came to declare is so direct and intimate that it transcends all legalism. Jesus calls men to do the will of God, but He does not call them to do this in their own strength. Obedience to the will of God is a duty which can only be accomplished by the grace of God. In this Jesus reverses the traditional conception of the relations between the Law and salvation. Instead of saying, "Do this and you will be saved," He says, "Be saved i.e. accept the forgiveness of

(7) Goguel. op. cit. 28.

(8) Matthew v, 48.

"God which I bring so that normal relations between God and you may
 "be established, or rather re-established, and you will obey the
 "Law. More than that, you will do the will of God in spheres where
 "the Law gives no guidance and in the inner life which escapes the
 "injunctions of the Law." "It seems incredible to me" says M.
 Goguel, "that such a moral revolution was independently produced
 "twice in so short a space of time by Jesus and by Paul. Nor does
 "it seem to me rash to conjecture that it was under the influence
 "of the thought of Jesus that Paul saw his Pharisaical assurance of
 "salvation by the keeping of the Law crumble within him. It has
 "been said - and rightly - that conversion involved for Paul a trans-
 "position of values. One would say with equal justification that
 "its consequence was a reversal of the movement of the moral and re-
 "ligious life. In Saul the Pharisee it was from obedience to the
 "Law towards salvation. In the Apostle it was directed from salva-
 "tion, not yet completed but nevertheless already real, to an obed-
 "ience to the Law of God, made possible only by the Spirit of God
 "creating in the believer a new creature." (9) Or as Professor
 C.A. Anderson Scott has neatly phrased it. "Paul, as a Jew, had
 "thought that men should keep the Law in order that they might be
 "saved. As a Christian he saw that men must be saved in order that
 "they might keep the Law." (10)

(9) Goguel. op. cit. 30.

(10) C.A. Anderson Scott. Christianity According to St. Paul. 45.

Thus the order "the Gospel and the Law" and not that of "the Law and the Gospel" is more in line with that of early Christianity in its most authentic form, that which is marked by the inspiration of Jesus and the thought, if not always the words, of the Apostle Paul.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Most of the relevant literature has been consulted in the preparation of this thesis but the bibliography is confined, with a few exceptions, to works actually quoted or referred to in the writing of the thesis. The exceptions are certain books and magazine articles which have been found helpful though there has been no occasion to mention them in the text.

For the sake of convenience the following classification has been used:-

- I. Works by the Leaders of the Dialectical Theology.
 - II. Works having a Direct Bearing on the Subject of the Thesis.
 - III. Works on the Historical Background.
 - IV. Commentaries.
 - V. Other Works.
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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE BIBLIOGRAPHY.

E.R.E.	=	Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
Ev. Th.	=	Evangelische Theologie.
Ex. T.	=	Expository Times.
H.D.B.	=	Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible.
I.C.C.	=	International Critical Commentary.
M.N.T.C.	=	Moffatt New Testament Commentary.
R.G.G.	=	Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.
T.E.h.	=	Theologische Existenz heute.
Th. R.	=	Theologische Rundschau.
Z.d.Z.	=	Zwischen den Zeiten.
Z.f.sy.Th.	=	Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie.
Z.f.Th.u.K.	=	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche.

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